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ABSTRACT

To analyze high school students' access to the forms and content of knowledge, the author used nonparticipant ethnographic research in four midwestern high schools to study how the pattern of knowledge control in the classroom varies in different administrative contexts. Through observation of social studies classrooms and interviews with teachers, students, and administrators, she examined the presentation of economics knowledge, the organizational structure of the school, administrators' relationship to the classroom and the curriculum, and the overall community setting. Research results are presented in 11 chapters grouped into three parts. Part 1's three chapters discuss social structure and classroom knowledge, review previous research, set forth the research design, and describe administrators' and teachers' patterns of control of the classroom and curriculum planning. In part 2, four chapters describe each school, its structure, community, and administrative context, and individual teachers' methods of classroom and knowledge control. Comparative analysis of the data is presented in part 3, which considers the locus of authority in the school and the classroom, methods of "defensive teaching" to maintain control of knowledge, and the effects of these teaching methods on the economics knowledge presented in class. (Author/RW)

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CONTRADICTIONS OF CONTROL

A Report to the National Institute of Education

LINDA M. MCNEIL

Wisconsin Center for Public Policy
Madison, Wisconsin
June, 1982

EA 014 984

CONTRADICTIONS OF CONTROL:
THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT OF SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE

Final Report of
"The Institutional Context Controlling Classroom Knowledge"

Linda M. McNeil
June, 1982

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APPENDIX A (submitted as a separate paper) (See EA 015 131)
"Defensive Teaching and Classroom Control" (to be published in Ideology and Education, edited by Michael Apple and Lois Weis, Temple University Press, 1982).

PREFACE

This research is the second in a series of analyses of students' access to knowledge content and knowledge forms in high schools. The series is predicated on the assumption that in a democracy, one has a right to know and that in a technological society, one has an imperative to know. At present, schools are the most pervasive public sector agents of the transmission of knowledge. By their adaptation of cultural content for developing young minds, they are also creators and contributors as well as transmitters of knowledge. The pervasiveness of compulsory schooling gives schools a critical role in legitimating information and ways of knowing, in legitimating an official culture for inheritance by children.

Because of the centrality of schools as legitimators of the cultural heritage, or selected aspects of it, school knowledge should not go unexamined. School knowledge has been assumed to aim at fostering learning, at increasing achievements. Yet many factors within schools inhibit student access to knowledge and to knowledge forms. These include deliberate decisions limiting the scope and sequence schedules for particular stages of student "readiness" and limitations of subject matter boundaries. Other factors are more subtle, perhaps hidden, but no less determinative of students' interaction with ways of knowing: personal values of teachers, institutional constraints, outside political pressures, the school's place in the nexus of economic and legal institutions.

Having watched as a public school teacher the tension between

goals of withholding and dispensing information, I became concerned about the nature of school knowledge, its origins, its relations to the teachers and students whose interactions create school knowledge from prepared materials and from their own experience. The question of the values embodied and the views of the world implied by school knowledge led to the series of research on in-use curriculum.

The series forms a kind of set of concentric circles or arenas of analysis, beginning with the classroom. In the center circle, or first study, three high school history classes were studied intensively for an understanding of the nature of economics information students are exposed to in required social studies classes. Within this setting, the discovery was made that because of the methods of presentation, here a teacher-centered approach with very little contribution or involvement by students, the classroom knowledge was not always credible to students, despite their apparent mastery of content, as measured by the teachers' tests. Interviews revealed that the teachers and students were meeting in a ritual of performing minimum tasks in order to gain institutional rewards, course credits for the students and efficiencies of time and energy for the teachers. The interviews further revealed that unknown to the students, the teachers had much broader knowledge of the subject than they admitted in class; they limited the treatment of content partly in order to control student behavior. Just as the teachers were bracketing their personal information, the students were silently but actively resisting his simplified content, especially when it contradicted non-school sources of information which seemed more legitimate to them. The overt curriculum, or information presented, and its impact on students were not necessarily the same.

Because the teachers rooted their teaching strategies in the need to maintain their own efficiencies and authority in an institution whose administrative context provided more constraints than support, the second study was planned to investigate the administrative context within which teachers make decisions of knowledge access and knowledge control. Thus the second, larger concentric circle is the organizational setting, the structure within which the classroom derives its character. Schools were selected for study which systematically varied form the first school in the relation of the administration to the classroom. That research is reported here.

The organizational focus of this research does not imply that schools operate in a vacuum. Where relevant, these schools were analyzed for their reflection of their community setting or their relations to the broader social system. That broader analysis is not ignored by the institutional focus of this study; rather, the research into the internal workings of the school is a necessary link before we can fully understand how schools mediate the broader culture, the power relations of the society, and messages schools give students about one's role in that society. Future research, including a project in progress involving students' non-school employment and its effect on schooling, will further situate the school in the broader economic and cultural context.

The study is also addressed to the lowered expectations which students, teachers, and the public are bringing to schools. After several decades of expecting schools to solve social problems, the truism in the press and in much government discussion as well as among the direct constituents of schools is that not much that is constructive should be expected of schools.

While the research reported here did uncover feelings among some teachers that they could no longer affect their students, and some attitudes among students and administrators that not much of significance would happen at school, the data also point to specific local and institutional characteristics feeding this cycle, to vulnerabilities with the cycle of lowered expectations, and to evidence that contradicts much of the general analysis that blames on government regulation, students, or "the times" the expectation that schools are somehow "worse."

Many of the teachers and students observed and interviewed for this research belie the premature mourning for the death of public schools. All of the teachers observed were trying to teach and teach effectively within what they perceived to be their personal and institutional limitations. For their cooperation with the study, for allowing an observer for an entire semester, for their thoughtful responses to interviews and their genuine welcome of a researcher at their lunch table and in their classrooms, I owe an incredible debt of thanks. Promises of anonymity prevent my thanking them here by name. Descriptions of them and of their schools have been occasionally altered to protect their anonymity. The slight factual variations in descriptions of people and neighborhoods preserve the spirit of what was observed but hopefully prevent identification. The purpose of the research was not to single out teachers or schools but to raise analytical questions and refine the conceptualizations we have of school processes.

I am also extremely indebted to those administrators who permitted access to their schools and who took time to be interviewed. Their admission of a researcher is evidence of their concern for improvement and their pride in their school's program.

Though the students rarely knew what to think of an adult who was not a student teacher, they spoke frankly in interviews, shared their thoughts about the school and their opinions about the world around them. Without them, the study would have been much less rich.

I am grateful to the National Institute of Education for supporting the research. Gail MacColl at NIE provided not only administrative support with grants, office, paperwork and bureaucratic requirements, but added support for the substance of the research as well. She and her colleague Fritz Mulhauser are to be thanked not only for overseeing the research from their agency's viewpoint, but for their personal interest in building networks among researchers and practitioners with common interests.

James B. Wood, president of the Wisconsin Center for Public Policy, consented to have the grant brought under the Center's auspices, and his successor Hal Bergan presided over the concluding phases. The Center's staff provided a congenial work atmosphere and interaction on policy-related issues. June Harrington, of the Center, gave invaluable typing assistance; Alice Brown tackled the huge task of transcribing the interview tapes; Jane Johnson dispatched budgetary procedures with great efficiency. Pat Matthews and Vivian Brown, of Austin, typed the final report with care.

My role as researcher on the project benefited greatly from the insights of several fellow scholars. Mary Metz was particularly helpful in discussing our mutual concern for the individuals who live and work in the institutions we study; Michael Apple provided lively theoretical exchanges; Fred Newmann's work on public policy issues helped early in

conceptualizing the relation between knowledge content and knowledge forms in social studies. Mike Hartoonian, who knows and serves Wisconsin high schools well, gave wise advice on the selection of the schools. Ann Swidler and Jeffrey Leiter generously consented to comment on the report. The Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University, through their Visiting Scholar program, provided the opportunity to talk through the analysis and answer hard questions in preparation for the final writing. As ever, John Palmer helped in innumerable ways, especially as mentor and model by his long-standing dedication to the quality of social studies education.

Kenneth McNeil shared his wealth of expertise on organizational analysis as well as confidence in the importance of the research. Kathryn and Carrie McNeil, whose expectations of learning are never low, provided the inspiration.

The Mock Turtle went on:
"We had the best of educations -- in fact, we went
to school every day."

* * * * * * * * *

"And how many hours a day did you do lessons?"
said Alice, in a hurry to change the subject.
"Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle,
"nine the next, and so on."
"What a curious plan!" exclaimed Alice.
"That's the reason they're called lessons." the
Gryphone remarked; "because they lessen from
day to day."
"Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday?"
"Of course it was," said the Mock Turtle.
"And how did you manage on the twelfth?"

from Alice in Wonderland
by Lewis Carroll

PART I

BACKGROUNDS AND FINDINGS

CHAPTER 1

SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND CLASSROOM KNOWLEDGE

The proposed study examines ways in which the "professional-bureaucratic" split between school administrators and classroom teachers shapes or constraints teachers' decisions regarding student access to information. In the American setting, the coupling of "educational administration" with "curriculum and instruction" has been almost non-existent. Training in these areas is generally delegated to different departments within schools of education. This "split" within schools theoretically gives classroom teachers almost total control over knowledge content in classes. But on the other hand, it imposes upon the teacher many of the risks of introducing controversial or complex information. Examining the dynamics of this American administrative context of knowledge control is especially important because most existing research on knowledge control in schools comes from British schools, where the teaching and administrative roles have often been much more tightly coupled. Using classroom observations and interviews with teachers, students, and administrators, this study examined how the pattern of knowledge control in the classroom varies in different types of administrative contexts, specifically, those where there is some formal administrative involvement in curriculum planning and those where administrators are indifferent to curriculum content.

The research question arose in a study of in-use social studies where it was learned that traditional models of curriculum analysis were conceptually inadequate to capture the institutional dynamics

mediating the distribution of knowledge in classrooms. Focusing on the distribution of economics information through required U.S. history classes, the study demonstrated how the limits the teachers imposed on knowledge admissible to classrooms greatly proscribed the economics information, though their formal goals called for extended study of economics topics (McNeil, 1977). In reaction to previous events and policy shifts, the teachers tightly controlled course content, to the extent of requiring almost no reading, writing, or discussing by the students. The students' apparently passive receptivity to teacher lectures was revealed in interviews to be masking active negotiation regarding their level of acceptance or rejection of information and their willingness to disrupt classroom efficiency to add information or question the lecture content. Further, interviews with teachers revealed that they too often suspended or bracketed personal information, in order to maintain authority and efficiency. The result was that students and teachers met in the transmissions of simplified, consensus information which omitted ideas, facts and points of view both knew but decided to forfeit to goals of grades and credits and minimal effort.

The particular events shaping this pattern of negotiation will be elaborated below; the effects that negotiation had in eliminating all topics which were controversial, of current news interest, or complicated will be described. The crucial question raised for the present study is, <u>how was this pattern of knowledge control shaped and perpetuated by its administrative context</u>? By ignoring the administrative context, certain "causes" for this tight teacher control of knowledge access can be traced to the teachers'

personalities and levels of training, to the students' eleven-year experience in second-guessing teachers' reward systems, and to specific community events and changes in school policy which affected the teachers. But these cannot fully "explain" what went on in these classrooms. The traditional model of curriculum evaluation (which I have elsewhere termed "management model"[1]) would point to analysis of curriculum planning for an explanation, and measure the effects of that planning by testing the students' store of "economic information" (Lumsden, 1970). Sociological analysis, in the tradition of Young (1971) and Apple (1977), might claim that within an industrial-capitalist society, one can only expect social studies content to distort political and economic realities: the curriculum reflects systemic power inequalities. One of these inequalities is unequal access to information needed to have some control over one's life in the political and economic system (Illich, 1971; Apple, 1979).

The management model, which assumes distribution of knowledge and increased student achievements as a school goal, cannot capture dynamics which lie outside formal goals and achievement measures, which contribute to the withholding or limiting of information as well as to the distribution of information. The societal approach to curriculum, on the other hand, does not do justice to the local, institutional and personal dynamics which mediate the larger social forces at the classroom level. Patterns of knowledge access and knowledge control, then, cannot be adequately deduced from either of the dominant models of curriculum analysis. The previous study offers strong evidence that many variables weighing upon knowledge control lie within the classroom, its structural and personal components.

The same study raises serious questions about the administrative context within which teachers and students negotiate their willingness to put personal knowledge at risk in classrooms. In some schools, this administrative context includes direct intervention in suggesting, requiring or limiting curricular content. In the school studied, the laissez-faire view the administrators at all levels took toward content was complicated by the fact that only the administrators held the power to sanction or reward teachers. Their failure to exercise it in this instance gave parents and students no leverage for increasing student access to information, thus reinforcing students' unwillingness to risk personal knowledge in class or to object to such restrictions as non-negotiable test answers. At the same time, events in the history of the school had made teachers feel that the administration had imposed on them, reduced their efficiencies (thus "effectiveness") without indreasing their rewards.

In the studied school, increasing distance between administrators' management objectives and teachers' content domains heightened the problem of classroom knowledge access. Neither oversight of curriculum, nor "controlling economics information," was a formal management "problem" in this school. Yet the effect of certain actual and symbolic administrative powers and policies was to undergird teachers' limiting school knowledge in such a way as to deny students access to information about their economic system. They were not only restricted to teacher-supplied information, as opposed to printed resources or other speakers, but to one perspective within those lectures, rather than a more complex approach to historical issues or economic information.

This school is somewhat unique in that it represents the "best" of public schools, according to such criteria as availability of teaching resources, bright students, adequate tax base, progressive community values, and a lack of substantive restrictions on the way teachers conducted their classes. But if limitations placed upon student access to information were so tight even here, significant questions are raised regarding the patterns of knowledge control in schools:

1) How pervasive is this pattern of limited access to knowledge? (To what extent would we find the same classroom dynamics in schools where the administrative context for controlling curriculum is structured differently?)
2) Do the control strategies which teachers use to open or limit knowledge access in classrooms vary according to different kinds of formal administrative contexts for controlling curriculum?

Controlling Classroom Knowledge: What the Previous Study Tells Us

Research Assumptions

The previous study was built on two principal assumptions: that one's store of knowledge in a technological society is directly related to one's power and self-determination; and that being well-informed on economic issues is vital to the decisions the present generation will make as adults as they deal with long-term distribution of food and energy resources and the need for institutions to cope with growing disparities between have and have-not nations.

The first assumption is generally discussed more by sociologists of knowledge than by educators. Its application to education has

been characteristic more of recent British curriculum research than of American. As discussed by Young (1971), MacDonald (1977), and Whitty (1977), schools have traditionally served to distribute to the masses the cultural definitions of the elite classes. Students whose social class status marked them for leadership in government and business were tracked off into schools which would equip them with the languages, mathematical and political tools, and social skills needed for powerful positions. Students of lower class origins could expect to receive an education which would give them the skills and attitudes necessary to become docile workers in the factories and mills. The course content differentials reflect not only information, but attitudes toward gaining information (Gorzin, Young and Whitty, 1976). Restricting information access to certain classes gives those classes cultural hegemony over other classes (Bourdieu, 1977). Schools thus serve to legitimate certain aspects of the culture by the way school information is selected, by the ways it is selectively distributed, and by the way it reinforces social inequalities by giving advantage to those who already possess advantage (Sharp and Green, 1975).

British research on this topic is reflected in Bernstein's work on educational transmissions through language, Keddie's study of the subtle ways teachers manipulate student responses, and Sharp and Green's study of a school in which teachers maintained tracking within the classroom, rewarded those students who most conformed to a middle-class image, despite a policy mandate to de-tracking (Bernstein, 1977; Keddie, in M. Young, 1971; Sharp and Green, 1975). Shifts in British educational policies at the national level, toward a more common

curriculum and open access to information for all students, have led to empirical studies such as these to determine the extent to which these policies have been undermined or carried out in classrooms.

Drawing on these writers and on Bourdieu of France (1977) and Habermas (1971) of Germany, Michael Apple has introduced this view of knowledge to the American discussion of curriculum. He has noted that students are systematically denied certain kinds of information so that they will not question the governmental and economic systems.

Although I have argued elsewhere that educators tend to overrate the relation of knowledge to power, to the exclusion of such resources as financial or political clout, the centrality of knowledge to one's political autonomy is clear, especially since more and more issues upon which voters and elected representatives are called on to decide hinge upon such technicalities as the potential for disposing of nuclear wastes safely or the possible dangerous effects of certain chemicals. On more and more political decisions, the polity is asked to make decisions in ignorance, yielding increasing political power to "experts" who have the esoteric information. Given the increasing complexity of these decisions and of the knowledge needed to make them in such a way as to avoid global disaster, the importance of one's store of knowledge and one's ability to select among sources of information grows more critical. Yet without the British attention to social class access to power, it is doubtful American educators would have begun to deal with the problem. Our curriculum research, within the management model, assumes that schools exist to convey or distribute "learnings" and thereby increase student achievements. The content of the information being "learned" is rarely made

problematic. Yet that content must be made problematic if we are to view our institutions as embodiments of human interests and begin to see the school as an institution that embodies power assumptions (Habermas, 1971).

Perhaps most fruitful in this regard are the simple questions asked by Young (1971) to give direction to the study of school knowledge. Rather than begin by asking the effects of curricula (as in the measurement of achievements), he would ask where does the knowledge come from, whose knowledge is it, and whose interests does it serve?

The second assumption for the previous study builds upon the first. That is, economics information is central to one's knowledge capital in a democratic society. Today economic institutions as well as economic policies within those institutions are coming under intense scrutiny as to their ability to cope with national and international problems of food and housing, with equitable distribution of wealth, with energy and production. Uncertainties of worldwide economic problems would seem to mandate a sound economic education for all; yet few American school children study anything formally called economics. It was this contradiction which prompted the previous study of in-use curriculum. If students were rarely exposed to formal economics content, then what they were learning about their economic system must be in the form of tacit or fragmented "learnings" as filtered through their other subjects. The fact that economics information has been systematically omitted is itself a powerful lesson regarding one's right and one's ability to understand economic institutions. If we are to know how schools

distribute economic information, it will be necessary to look into non-economics courses, for that is where most students, and certainly those of lesser ability who do not qualify for a senior-level economics elective, would encounter interpretations of economics content deemed adequate for legitimation by schools.

Theoretical Bases

As already stated, traditional American curriculum research rarely makes the actual content problematic. An example of the most prevalent type of research on school children's knowledge of economics is the Test of Economic Understanding administered by the Joint Council on Economics Education. The Joint Council is made up of business people, representatives of labor and agriculture, and educators interested in economics education who lobby for more economics courses and units for schools and produce and distribute materials, curriculum guides, and inservice resources to schools. Their assumption is that the lack of training in economics makes social studies teachers poor economics teachers, but that teachers can become more informed and that this will be reflected in the test scores. Institutional or societal factors affecting school knowledge selected are not discernible by their models.

The Joint Council is a fairly good indicator of the limits of a management approach to curriculum analysis. When goals are stated in terms of outputs (achievements), then curriculum planning becomes arranging inputs (materials, tests of students aptitudes, instructional techniques) so as to maximize outputs. The substance of the intervening curriculum is rarely held up for scrutiny, and even less likely to be examined is its embodiment of political interests. The

question of the basis of selection of content is almost always expressed in terms of probability of increasing achievement levels rather than in terms of the importance the content has for giving the student greater power over his life.

A critique of this model of school knowledge has emerged which rejects this conceptualization of schooling as an arena of rational planning. As explicated by Bowles and Gintis, Apple and Franklin, Sharp and Green and others, schools are products of a larger network of social, legal and economic institutions. School practices are seen as rooted in ideologies inherent in technocratic, capitalistic institutions. According to this view, what goes on in schools is the selection and preparation of students for filling social roles in the system as it is; despite the many inequalities in society, the schools help preserve that society by preventing discussion of controversy and of dissident ideas which may call policies or institutions into question.

One of the most important contributions of this approach to school curriculum is to examine the legitimacy of school practices. Schools are examined for those activites and values which, by virtue of mandatory attendance and nearly universal credentialing, they legitimate. Schools' very pervasiveness, as I have argued elsewhere, lend them power to define what constitutes legitimate education. In addition, Bourdieu, Bernstein, Apple, Williams and Bowles and Gintis, trace, in various settings, the social relations within schools to the social relations in the work place in order to document those forces within society which legitimate school practices. They see most school practices, however scientific and neutral they purport

to be, as embodying power relationships which help keep the students' individual development, as an educational goal, subservient to the maintenance of the economic system. They trace this variously to deliberate control of school boards by conservative business interests (Callahan), to the institutionalization of social control goals during peak industrialization and immigration around the turn of the century (Krug, Kliebard), and to the post-Sputnik nationalization of many sources of policy and funding in American education.

This model of curriculum analysis would suggest that certain kinds of information have been omitted from public schools because they challenge the status quo of the society, or because dealing with them challenges the programmatic regularities of the institution of schooling. Primarily, they are interested in the linkages between the regularities of the workplace, both in social class divisions and in hierarchical disparities, and those of the school. One weakness of this approach is that in the past it has tended to deduce processes from results. Saying that school practice is determined by the economic realities of society does not of itself illuminate the dynamics by which schools filter information. Those few studies which have examined classrooms, especially those few observation studies, have focused primarily on interaction patterns, because the studies were British and attempting to find out whether British democratization of schools was indeed taking place as mandated. An exception is the previous study, which did focus on content, and only looked at those interactions which played upon content.

A deterministic approach to curriculum analysis has the potential weakness of failing to account for variation. If one is

to deduce institutional practices from societal descriptions, then one must ignore or explain away the wide range of divergence among teaching styles and approaches to content. While Bowles and Gintis, and perhaps Apple, might argue that all school knowledge is ultimately reduced to credentials, and thus ultimately processed alike, parents and students seem to believe that different approaches to information are indeed different in some ways; certainly, teachers have always thought so. These apparent differences need to be dealt with (McNeil, 1977).

Another weakness is that a deterministic picture as presented through aggregate data in a post hoc format like the Bowles and Gintis analysis tends to omit the meanings held by the actors. This becomes crucial if we are to view the participants of schooling as people rather than as indicators or pieces of an aggregate. While the critical approach, and especially those writers who aim for emancipatory research, too often omits the individual and collective potential of the participants by reducing them to actors in a determined environment. It is also crucial to understanding conflicts and counter hegemonies existent despite patterns of control.

In this same vein, the critical model also errs in a way similar to the management paradigm, in portraying the student as passive, as being acted upon. The management paradigm views the student as the recipient of "instructional techniques" which will produce in him or her "learnings" (Apple, 1974). The critical paradigm pictures the students as socialized into conservative, consensus content that deprives them of all ability to reflect on their lack of power in industrial society. As will be discussed

below, this view of the student is not always accurate (if ever), and poses one of the most important reasons for the study reported here. Emergent literature on student resistance in American schools is very fragmented, but beginning.

The contributions of the critical paradigm to the understanding of schools as distributors of cultural capital, or knowledge, are substantial. This model of research raises to consideration the processes by which social relations and cultural content are transmitted through institutions. But its failure to deal with variation among schools and to deal with the individual participants and their meanings makes it less than definitive as an approach to knowledge control in schools. Most important, it deduces school distribution of knowledge from societal effects, which may or may not stem primarily from schools, rather than from looking inside the "black box" of schools. While this has been a frequent criticism of Bowles and Gintis, it is only beginning to be followed up as a serious research pursuit in this country.

The research reported here is grounded in the understanding that what happens in schools is not a rational process, despite the proliferation of the management model in imposing technical forms on planning, practice and evaluation, but is shaped by the school's roles within the larger social forces. The study itself should be seen as a middle-level analysis, aimed at illuminating the internal working of schools so that their links to these larger social forces and institutional networks can be better understood.

Analyzing the Administrative Context of Knowledge Control

Within curriculum literature, there is little precedent for examining the administrative context. A concern for this research is, emerging, however. In The Social Location of Teacher Perspectives, Martyn Hammersley (1977), discusses the role of the teachers in negotiating their place in the school, accepting certain features as being beyond their control (as the de-tracking in the former school) and others as being constraining but not controlling. Developing a strategy within the limits of their role is on-going and in need of more study lest social forces or institutional limits be seen as totally determining. He says that little research exists that offers this kind of dynamic picture of the decision-making of teachers.

Two other British writers raise the issue of getting inside the "black box" of schools to better understand their role in distributing information and social values. Whitty has written, "I suggest that we might fruitfully examine the complex of social relations within which objectified knowledge becomes reified or experienced as oppressive and constraining" (1976). In addition, he has called for research which will explore "without pre-defined limits, the nature of the relationship between the cognitive aspects of knowledge and social organization." Such research can point to "the process whereby particular conceptions of knowledge are sustained" by the classroom teacher.

In The Curriculum and Cultural Reproduction, Madeleine MacDonald (1977) has called for research on the internal relations of schools as they shape cultural transmissions of schools:

> What we need, I would argue, is an analysis of both the conflictual and consensual elements within the school and in society at large, and for that we need a theory which encompasses firstly the features of economic and political organization of the class structure, and secondly the explicit and implicit features of our school system.

While at present the British research on knowledge control in schools is more extensive than in America, the helpfulness of that body of literature is somewhat limited on the subject of the relationship between administrators and either students or teachers. The reason is that traditionally the split between administrators and teachers has been much less marked in Britain, where the headmaster function involved both teaching and administrative duties, and where the wider split comes at the level of inspectors and others hired to oversee implementation of national policies. Having no such teaching principals and fewer national directives regarding curricular content, we must develop a research strategy appropriate to the American patterns of "conflictual and consensual elements" within schools. For such a study, three types of literature may be helpful in informing the research strategy. The first two relate to the institution of the school and to historical analysis of the origins of the school policies related to the split between administrators and teachers. The second is organization theory itself, which may shed some light on organizational dynamics commonly overlooked by educators but relevant to the processing of knowledge in schools. From this literature, we will draw on the descriptive language of Weick for the explicit features of schooling and on

March and Olsen for the ambiguities these generate. Next, observations by Hall, Edelman, K. McNeil and Weber will deal with the implicit effects of these structural features. Together, these may give some direction to the study of the administrative context of knowledge control.

The School as a Political Institution

To see the school as a controller of knowledge and protector of certain economic intersts is not novel. George Counts, Harold Rugg and others were making the point decades ago (Krug, 1972). But the predominance of scientific and psychological language on curriculum development, particularly post-Sputnik, obscured all but the ameliorative intentions of schools in professional literature. The re-emergence of a discussion of the political role of schools came in Britain with shifts away from former rigid tracking systems and in this country probably with the attention the Civil Rights movement focused on the contradictions between the democratic claims of schooling and schools' actual role in reinforcing class and racial differences. Many of these studies focused on particular aspects of social control or domination within schools, such as omissions of women's history or black literature, which might be capable of remediation.

A broader analysis has come to center on those aspects of schooling which stem from the institution's role as an instrument of domination. Writers in this tradition draw on the work of Habermas in conceptualizing institutions as emobdiments of human interests. Althusser and Williams (see MacDonald, 1977) have contributed insights on the school's role in cultural reproduction, that is, in

preserving and transmitting only cultural selections which reinforce societal inequalities. Bourdieu and Berstein have furthered this research on the role of schools in patterns of societal domination (primarily at the philosophical level, reinforced by some of Bernstein's work on the language and control patterns within schools). Empirical work in this perspective is thin and much-needed, leaving writers to draw inferences from descriptions of results, as with Bowles and Gintis (1976).

The contribution of this perspective on schools, however, is important. Most of the language of professional educators is couched in rational terms, though schools are rarely rational places. Administrators state procedures in terms of management objectives of formal powers and tasks. Assessments are measures of the nearness to goals, whether one is referring to increasing reading levels of students, decreasing the number of discipline cases, raising average achievement scores, or whatever. An institutional perspective can help break out of the language of cognitive psychology and management, toward an examination of the unintended consequences of institutional schooling. So long as researchers take at face value the language and definitions of educators, research will fail to make problematic the processes of schools. In the words of Holly,

> To appreciate the material as opposed to the abstract character of education, we must be aware of the basic involvement of social relations in human learning, and therefore, of the inextricable connection between the social-psychic processes, learning, and the social organization, education (in Society, State and Schooling).

Most broadly, such an approach to the institution of schooling would look at two components. The first would be the power relations within the institution and their effects upon the participants. The second would be the power relations within the society which are reflected in or contradicted by the institutional relations. Once these descriptive analyses are explicated, one may look at the dialectic between the organization and the society. How do the relations within the one control, determine, constrain or oppose the relations within the other? This would mean viewing the relations of the school as reflections of societal realities (such as the means of production) rather than as mere representations of scientific or technical theories of pedagogy or psychology.

Habermas' study of the German university as a political institution is one of the few actual studies of an institution within this perspective. That is, his is one of the few studies which begins to give concrete reality to the internalist aspects of an institution (Toward a Rational Society, 1971). Smaller scale studies are emerging in Britain and may be found in such volumes as Society, State and Schooling (edited by Young and Whitty), in Explorations in the Politics of School Knowledge, and in some of the units of the Open University education curriculum.

Most useful for the present study are the implications this perspective has for understanding knowledge control. As applied by Young and others to schools, this question lifts curriculum out of the management context and explores its relation to power configurations within the school and to social forces outside the school. Only through examining curriculum as the result of deliberate or

implicit choices can we begin to reflect on its origins and its effects on the learning patterns of students. In the previous study, the effects were found to be more related to the opportunity costs of skills and information not learned than to achievements or socialization into teacher-supplied information.

Interestingly, this perspective on the school as an institution of knowledge control, while helpful in raising the research issue, proved to be less helpful in tracing the origins of the knowledge control. This research perspective assumes that there are powerful interests served by the conservative role of schools in selectively dispensing information, or that the inequities in the means of production determine the processing of students in schools. The previous study did document the school's role in distributing only selective kinds of social studies information through requires subjects. Controversial and complex economic issues were omitted or treated as items to be memorized in a list. But the fact of tight control over knowledge content, and of serious omissions, does not explain the dynamics by which the school as an institution seemed to be serving conservative economic interests and status quo political inequalities by denying students access to information. Whether this control is direct or indirect is very important because it relates to the perceptions the participants (especially the teachers) have of their role. The nature of control can lie outside the model of institutional interests. Or that model must be elaborated to include the internal dynamics by which control mechanisms operate.

The Administrator-Teacher "Split" and the Origins of School Bureaucracy

For the original school studied, the patterns of knowledge control, while they might be representative of the schools' larger role in social control through differential distribution of knowledge, were implicit in the structure rather than entirely explicit in the minds of the participants. The teachers' control over course content, and their subsequent setting of tight limits around knowledge access, came as a result of their apparent autonomy over curriculum. Yet as has been suggested, the teachers felt constrained by administrative policies, even when those were rarely directed at course content. The administration had delegated the curriculum domain to teachers, yet retained the power to assign students to the school and to the classes, to group students by ability or not, to provide or not provide materials and support necessary for teaching large classes of mixed abilities. So the teachers in controlling knowledge in the classroom were adopting a strategy that would minimize their own risks and inefficiencies within the limits imposed by the administration.

Several historians have delved into the history of bureaucratic schooling in this country. Their work is important to this study if we are to understand why the literature on the school as a political institution is not definitive on control of knowledge in classrooms. From reading Habermas and Bourdieu, one almost gets the picture of stodgy businessmen sitting in board rooms deciding how to manipulate schools so that they will continue to eliminate controversy or social criticism (see Cook-Freeman, 1978). But the locus of control over knowledge in the school observed was so far removed from corporate boardrooms that no one could trace "control" of knowledge from

business or other elites, to pressures they applied on administrators, to limits they set for course content. If knowledge control has its sources in social relations outside the classroom, this control must have been exercised very indirectly.

It is at this point that the historical research on the bureaucratization of schools is most helpful. Krug (1972), Karier (1972), Callahan (1962), and Kliebard (1971) have traced many present-day school practices to early (1900-1920) establishment of school systems. Increasing enrollments and such factors as industrialization and immigration led city officials to seek maximum efficiency for school plants and personnel. The resultant borrowings from industrial language and factory efficiencies helped establish patterns for school administration which have persisted to the present. Such structural features as subject and grade divisions, the persistence of testing and competency standards were borrowed from industry to increase the "effectiveness" of growing school systems. In some cities, as noted especially by Callahan, the business community was actively involved in controlling school boards, in hiring administrators, in pressing for curricula amenable to Americanization of immigrants and training of compliant lower-level workers in offices and factories. In many cities, however, the initiative to emulate the business world originated with the school administrators, who sought the kind of status a business executive would have. Even though these origins have been forgotten by many who today still sit in cubicle classrooms to be processed through required compartmentalized courses toward standard certification, the origins of many school practices did in fact have their roots in pleasing elites. But the effects today may not be in

serving the interests of elites or anyone else; the prevailing control patterns may in fact be artifacts no longer serving elite interests, but neither serving the needs of the students.

The ideal model of the teacher in American schools derives from very different roots. From education for citizenship as advocated by Jefferson, to Dewey's broad goals that based learning experiences in life experiences, the teaching function has assumed a lofty idealism encompassing the teacher's wisdom and knowledge, the authority of the teacher deriving from that wisdom, and the role of the teacher as guardian of the culture, whether as resourceful one-room school marm or perfectionist Latin grammar headmaster.

The ideal model has underlain assumptions about how teachers should teach, how they should teach and how they should be regarded. The ideal model has, however, has been often hidden by significant changes in this century. The establishment of school administration within the language of business management was paralleled by the delegation of course content to teachers, using the language of psychology. While many course labels were the legacy of the grammar schools, the language of behavioral psychology and cognitive development came to dominate curriculum planning, instructional techniques and evaluation. Concurrently with the grounding of administration in one language form, teaching was becoming professionalized along different lines, using different language forms and controlling ostensibly different domains. Thus the traditional "split" between administrators and teachers originated at a time of great school growth and at a time of "professionalization" of both groups. That this split occurred during the greatest amount of active control of schools by economic elites is

telling. It suggests one explanation for the failure of the social control literature at the global level to deal with patterns of control at the classroom level. While patterns of control at that level might resemble predictions made by such writers as Apple, Habermas, or Bowles and Gintis, the attributions these writers and others might make to channels of control are not borne out, especially since administrators would be the presumed link between outside pressures and teachers, if such pressures were determining course content. Instead of such direct control, it would seem from the initial study that the patterns of control have more to do with the institutionalization of this professional split and the effects it has had on the risks teachers will take with making knowledge accessible in the classroom. With the history of the split more clearly in mind, we can turn to the resulting organizational dynamics, and to the literature of organization theory which may clarify them.

Loose Couplings in Schools

Traditional organizational literature has talked a great deal about the professional in a bureaucratic setting. Hall outlines the difficulty in rewarding professionals and the complexity of evaluation in a context of professionals as members of large-scale organizations. The situation is complicated further when professionals within one organization compete for domain. In schools, then, the situation would be messier still, because though domains are fairly clearly allocated, the teacher has powers limited only to the classroom and very little power to determine the structural relations of the rest of the school. As a result, we cannot assume that administrators' distance from the classroom gives them no influence over content.

In fact, teachers' control strategies may originate in their attempts to make their role, and life in their classrooms, more predictable amid what March and Olsen (1976) term the "ambiguities" of an organization where their authority is set within a context of dependency. Hall, and March and Olsen, note that within an ambiguous setting, especially where rewards and sanctions are uncertain, participants will seek routinization as a means of stabilizing their environment. Thus, the ambiguity generated by the professional distance between administrators and teachers may in fact have greater effect on decisions regarding content than either teachers or administrators are aware of. In the first school, teachers could not exercise any control over retrenchment policies or other unstable conditions in the school at large, but they could mitigate the effects of these on their daily teaching by tightening control over knowledge to avoid the inefficiencies and threats of students dealing with controversial material.

One organizational model which begins to act as a disclosure model for the on-going relation of administrators and teachers across this professional distance is Weick's model (1976) of "loosely coupled" organizations. In such organizations the presumably tight linkages usually thought of as characteristic of large-scale organizations are less persistent upon close inspection. In educational settings, various elements interact, while remaining essentially independent entities. The degree of coupling may vary according to altered circumstance (a crisis time in the school, a regular event such as registration or graduation where domains overlap, for example). During normal on-going relations, Weick sees teachers and administrators as among those elements in schools which are loosely coupled.

This model is helpful if we are to get beyond the notion of knowledge control as a management function or as social control which is channeled from abstract social forces (or conspiratorial businessmen), through administrators, to teachers. The knowledge control in schools is heavily dependent upon the degrees of authority exercised by administrators or teachers. In most high schools, the separateness or loose coupling between the administrative, or management function, and the teaching professionals gives the teacher the appearance of total control over knowledge content. Weick states that one advantage loose coupling has in an organization is to preserve a feeling of autonomy. He goes on to describe the negotiation necessary for each individual participant in such a loosely coupled system to maintain actual control rather than the appearance of control. In fact, one effect of a loosely coupled system is to isolate the elements for protection against shocks to the system. Within this loose coupling, there is what Weick calls "increased pressure on members to construct or negotiate some kind of social reality they can live with." For the teachers previously observed, this reality consisted of tight limits on course content even to the point of denying their own personal information in class discussions. If the predictability and stability for their situation were going to depend on their own initiative, as opposed to administrative protection, then that stability would come at the expense of the students' exposure to divergent content and resources.

The model of loose-coupling, then, provides an interesting way of viewing the organization so that control dynamics are seen in a context of loose or tight institutional constraints. Weick (1976)

quotes J. G. March as arguing that "loose coupling can be spotted and examined only if one uses methodology that highlights and preserves rich detail about context." He continues to say that such research can observe loose coupling only if it can see "what is and is not being done. The general idea is that time spent on one activity is time spent away from a second activity." The importance for the present study is not whether school administrators are loosely coupled with teachers. The usefulness of the model is in providing a way of looking at control dynamics which elude traditional social control (or knowledge control) literature. The apparent congruence between the organizational model of loose coupling and the traditional professional split between administrators and teachers which have left teachers with the appearance of control over content makes the model a helpful one in designing research variables which will illuminate the forces acting upon teachers' control of information.

While the loose coupling model explains in some ways the relations of teachers to administrators and possibly even to students, there remains the issue of the willingness of the students in the previous study to acquiesce to teacher-dominated content even when it meant suppressing their private knowledge. Edelman (1977) is more insightful here. He suggests that acquiescence can originate from the internalizing of external values or from belief in the authority of the controller. Whereas either of these may have an irrational basis, the acquiescence may be far more calculated, far more rational, based instead on perceived future gains. Just as teachers negotiate their risks and benefits in controlling knowledge, the students may be calculating their own costs and gains. This may "arise over time as

subordinates see that it would not be 'rational,' judged by criteria such as their own profit maximization [here, the course credit or grade], to disobey orders and still reach their own ends, under the political and market [i.e., school] conditions present" (K. McNeil, 1978). Acquiescence is the other side of control, and, according to Kenneth McNeil (writing on Weber's view of domination in organizations) and Edelman, is critical to the understanding of any pattern of control.[41] As I have previously written,

> When the person subject to control is a student, who has less than full knowledge of the benefits and risks attendant to acquiescence or rejection, even the apparently rational calculation can result in great losses. Here, the loss is the opportunity to learn something--either information or ways of getting information--which will increase the power the individual has to determine his choices in the economy. The inherent vulnerability in this situation is that the gains to the controller, here the teacher rather than the broader society, are merely short-term. As the teachers weary of conveying false, or incomplete, information, they increase their own distance from their students. And it is these distances and lack of trust in the ability to interact without losing the students to skepticism, which created the need for such rigid control in the first place. Domination is a two-way relationship. As long as research into schools remains at an abstract level, ungrounded in the specifics of interaction, only the more overt aspects of domination--the actions of the one dominating--will be apparent. By getting behind the surface actions of the classroom and aksing questions

of participants, one can bring to light some possible effects of that domination.

Commodification and Ritual

An additional organizational perspective renders moot the consideration of content by asserting that the substance of education has been reduced by standardization and institutionalization to schooling. If education is the "drawing out" of students, schooling is their passive processing through rituals derivative of the transformation of schools into large-scale institutions whose functions are largely determined in turn by the institutionalization of the social utility of the school. As components of the school, teachers, students and topics take on ritual meaning, as in the processing of students through required credits in order to give them a diploma to use as standardized currency in the economic world, the substantive meanings are no longer important. In fact, to deal with them is to raise uncertainties and inefficiencies beyond the capabilities of the technological modes of the institutions to resolve (Meyer and Rowan, 1978).

A similar view is expressed in the concern for the commodification of knowledge in schools (Apple, 1982; McNeil, 1977). Commodified knowledge is technically rationalized knowledge or knowledge that is seen to exist outside and apart from the student, to be packaged, transmitted, accepted, transformed into utilitarian function (course credit, credential, standardized test scores). Much school knowledge, especially at the elementary school level is commodified knowledge. But all school knowledge cannot be assumed to be reduced to ritual or to commodification.

The Tension Between Order and Education

In order to draw together these theories of school knowledge, institutional practice and organization, we must return to the original research question, the effect of the administrative environment on teacher's decisions on the accessibility of knowledge and knowledge forms to their students. By looking at school knowledge as socially constructed, as institutionally situated, we may begin to trace its origins, its possibilities, and its impact on students.

The history of educational administration is the history of the imposition of technical, supposedly rational processes on the management of schools. Most central to administrative functions are the social control aspects of the school. The administration is responsible to the accrediting agencies and state departments of education for the proper credentialing of the students. In addition, society, and the legal system as well as the school board, expect the administration to assume responsibility for the order in the building, the "smooth running" of the school. Together these two social control functions seem to occupy administrators to the exclusion of many other possible functions. This was certainly the case at Forest Hills High, the school observed in the first study.

Teachers, on the other hand, in the tradition of Dewey and Jefferson, are supposed to embody the educational aspects of schooling. There are some teachers caught up in credentialing, and many participating in the commodification of knowledge. But there exist those teachers who resist or fail to typify the Meyer and Rowan analysis that the educative function has been stripped of its meaning by the technological rituals of schooling.

It was the tension between these two extant goals, not the absence of the latter, which caused the Forest Hills teachers to resist administrative directives in the ways they did. They had not given up on the teaching/learning function of schools, nor had some of their students. These expectations were clearly being lowered by the predominance of an administrative context in which goals of credentialing and rationalized processes threatened the educative goals. The failure to resolve the tension in a way supportive of the educational purposes of the school prompted the teachers to design their courses in ways that preserved as much efficiency and authority as possible so that the teaching function could proceed, even if diminished form.

The selection of the schools was based on anticipated variation in the relationship between the administrative context and the curriculum in-use. These variations were known, or at least roughly estimated, at the time the schools were selected. What was not known, and what became the central focus of the field work, was the nature of the tension between the educative and social control goals in these schools, and the manner of resolving the tension where it existed. The unequal power relations in the schools, in most American schools, gave rise to questions about the mechanisms for resolving the tension as well as the outcome. Structural variations, individual or collective resistance within traditional structures, the influence of personality or extraneous community factors, or active negotiations were all among the possibilities raised by the observations at Forest Hills High. Investigation of these and other factors would lead to understanding not only whether the tension between the two goals

existed but how its resolution or lack of it affected students' access to knowledge in their school.

CHAPTER 2

INSIDE THE BLACK BOX

The research on the single high school and its economics curriculum revealed that we must bracket our assumptions of what goes on in classrooms if we are to analyze what actually does happen there. We must set aside concepts of achievements and learnings -- the outputs of schooling -- and look inside the "black box" of school processes to understand the nature of school knowledge. Traditional curriculum research has focused on measured achievements, presuming increased learning to be the goal of instruction. Subject matter specialists plan new materials in this mode. Evaluators make decisions about school quality within this mode. Critical curriculum theoriests explain school knowledge as the product of the reproduction of elite culture by groups powers enough to control schools for class dominance. Most educational administration literature accepts curriculum as unproblematic, or as scientifically-derived neutral content, and focuses instead on schedules, budgets, credits and credentials. None of these approaches to school practice situates school knowledge in its administrative context.

Questions which do make school knowledge problematic arose first with British sociologists of knowledge, asking where school knowledge comes from, whose interests it serves, and what forms it takes. Almost none of the work in this area goes beyond content analysis or classroom interaction models to establish the links between the forms and content of school knowledge and the larger institution. Analysis of the role

that institution plays in the broader economic and legal systems is frequently based on deductions from labor force stratification rather than examination of school practice.

The previous study proved the fruitfulness of extended ethnographic case studies for revealing the form, substance and origins of school knowledge within classrooms. It broke new ground in examining some of the effects of school knowledge on students. The present study has expanded the unit of analysis to the next larger concentric circle, the school, to compare effects the institutional setting has on these classroom dynamics.

Research Design

The research design attempted to grasp the complexities of the administrative context of knowledge control by gathering data from a variety of sources, but all within the field study format developed in the previous study. While survey or testing strategies may be informative in assessing the effects of interventions, Cicourel[1] has argued that field studies are necessary if we are to understand the day-to-day processes within educational institutions that take place over long periods of time. Delamont has observed that field studies in a holistic, anthropological tradition can permit systematic analysis and at the same time allow new categories of analysis to emerge.[2] The need for field studies which will document school distribution of information to differential student groups has been advocated by MacDonald, Apple, Young, and others. The chief difficulty is in designing a study which will yield fruitful conceptualizations of the interactive processes. Thus, generalizability will not depend on representativeness but on the applicability of the conceptualizations to other school settings.

The research strategy was developed to uncover several kinds of information. To remain parallel with the original study, it focused on economics information as distributed through required history classes. This information demonstrated the limits of knowledge admissible in the classroom, especially an area of knowledge having great relevance to students' future autonomy and having a broad range of teacher discretion in its presentation because of its traditional status as optional knowledge. As in the previous study, the knowledge access was characterized along such dimensions as the speaking patterns within the class (whether students contribute information, challenge lectures, ask questions, and so on), interaction of teacher and students with materials, initiative for topics, selection of materials and resources, use of assignments that required extended student response in the form of reading, writing or developing a project; the nature of testing and criteria of relevant information for lectures, discussion or testing.

As in the previous study, the negotiation patterns between students and teachers was also described. This included reflections by the teachers and at least one-third of the students in semi-structured interviews on their personal relation to knowledge in the classroom and the perceptions each has of the other's relation to knowledge.

The daily attendance in the classes over a one-semester period provided insights into the development over the duration of the course (all but a few were one-semester courses) of the expectations teachers and students brought to the teaching/learning process, effects each had on the other and effects any changes in the administrative policies had on their interaction.

Daily classroom observations, near-verbatim notetaking on course content and behaviors was joined for this study by analysis of the administrative context. This part of the data-gathering was more amorphous, involving casual conversations with teachers and administrators, structured interviews of relevant administrative personnel and teachers, investigation into the history of the school or specific programs, and observations of the daily workings of the school, including the formal policies and the in-use procedures. Following Wolcott's example, the extended time in the school provided ample opportunity for observing the routine as a backdrop for the unique occurrences.[3]

Several important topics were covered at the administrative level. The first was the actual formal control the administrators had over curriculum, teacher evaluation, program development or program evaluation. By administrators is meant any non-teaching person in the school, school district, or perhaps the state agencies who has direct or indirect power over the school program. For example, one principal or assistant principal might have had direct responsibility for social studies, while another held more power to reward or sanction teachers; both would be relevant to the study.

In addition to the formal, expressed powers over curriculum, those latent or informal powers or interactions which shaped content decisions were also documented. The feedback mechanisms by which administrators had knowledge of the curriculum content were also described. The administrative relationships discovered through observation were pursued in interviews with the teachers and administrators to determine their perspectives on their roles, their assessment of the teacher-administrator relationship and their understanding of the impact of the program on the

students. The observer's provisional interpretations were checked against staff rationale for their policies and against their perceptions of the nature of interactions. For purposes of remaining parallel with the earlier study, direct questions were posed regarding the calculations of one's interests within the institution, the negotiation of one's role, the negotiation of information exchanges among teachers and students. Course materials were reviewed as well.

In summary, the research design included non-participant ethnographic observation of the culture of the classroom with special attention to the distribution of information and ways of knowing; similar observations of the working of the social control mechanisms of the school, both formal and informal; attention to patterns of information exchange between administrators and faculty; historical investigation; and interviews with participants at all levels.[4] Return interviews after preliminary analysis of the data served to check on the observer's conclusions and to clarify or correct questions and possible misperceptions in the analysis.

Site Selection

Four mid-western high schools were selected according to their variation in administratove organization. They had in common (see the Introduction to Part II) adequate-to-high tax support, predominantly white, middle-class student populations, stable communities with stable or growing economies, and experienced teaching staffs.

The research centered on the key difference among the schools: the relation of their administrative personnel and policies to classroom knowledge. For site selection, these differences were based on descriptions furnished by school people around the state, the assessment of the social studies director of the state department of public instruc-

tion, university supervisors of teacher interns, and descriptions supplied by the schools' own personnel.

Forest Hills, the site of the first study, represented a school where teachers tightly controlled classroom knowledge in a setting of ostensible administrative laissez-faire distance from curriculum. It was the only high school in the study which is part of a large school system. At Maizeville, students' access to knowledge was more open in the classroom, though the administration was known to be equally removed from course content. Freeburg High was chosen for its reputation for limited student access to knowledge resources, with an administration involved in curriculum reform (the latter proved in reality to be less than accurate in actual practice; see Freeburg, Chapter 5.) Nelson High was reputed among personnel at the state department of public instruction, the nearby teacher training colleges and regional social studies teacher as having the most "academic" principal and substantive curriculum. From these varied schools a picture emerged of the organizational dynamics shaping teachers' decisions of knowledge access and knowledge control.

The following chart restates the variation among the schools, according to the pattern of administrative coupling to the curriculum and the pattern of knowledge access or control in the classroom.

FORMAL CONTEXT FOR CONTROL
OVER ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

Degree of Coupling Between Administration and Classroom Instruction	Degree of Formal Teacher Control of Knowledge	
	tighter control	more open access
involved administration	School #2 Freeburg High	School #3 Nelson High
distant administration	School # 1 Forest Hills High	School #4 Maizeville

CHAPTER 3

PATTERNS OF CONTROL

Because the research addresses several theoretical areas, it may be helpful to take the unusual step of listing in advance of the case study data summaries of the key findings. These will be substantiated by the descriptions of the schools and further elaborated in the sections following the case studies. They are presented here in capsule form not because they were known before the research (some were quite unanticipated, others foreshadowed from the original research but in need of verification by systematic variation), but because the abundant data do not lend themselves to one primary conclusion which one may carry as a thread through all the descriptive and analytical discussion.

The variation in administrative context did affect classroom teaching, both in setting a pattern of expectations and in defining the range of individual responses and initiatives within the parameters of the pattern. It must be reiterated, that the organizational impac- on curriculum at all American high schools is likely not to be encompassed by these four case studies. Only limited generalizations may be extrapolated from these data, most importantly in the questions raised about administrative impact on classroom knowledge, about the power relations with the institution, and about the role of individuals to accommodate to or resist institutional limitations. For example, schools where no union bargains for teachers will differ both in the autonomy or vulnerability teachers feel and in administrators' added powers of sanction and reward. The Wisconsin teachers had seen their

unions move from radical, contested beginnings to fairly narrow bargaining agents during their careers; many of them and at least two administrators who had been union members as teachers regretted the narrowed focus brought on by the institutionalization and acceptance of unions and by retrenching economic conditions which made the job security issues perhaps justifiably central to bargaining. By the same token, schools in states where the state or school district mandates certain basic course outlines or textbook adoptions would differ both in the discretion left to teachers and the sources of legitimacy of school practices; that legitimacy could more directly be traced to special interest groups, legislators, and citizens committees of textbook adoption. Schools whose principals function as headmasters would also differ from these four schools.

The three later schools, then, were selected for their specific variations from the first school studied, not for their representativeness of all American high schools. Because they encompass the most common school organizational forms, they should shed some light on widespread, if not universal, secondary school practices.

Structural Variation

Structural variations do affect the amount and spirit of teachers' work in developing and using resources. Structural arrangements, whether they originate from teacher initiatives or from administrative directive, lend support to teachers' ability to participate in the creation of course content, to keep up in their fields, to maintain professional status as a content authority. Or they can hinder such efforts.

Degree of Coupling

The effects of these variations in structure may be intended or unintended. They do not follow logically from the degree of coupling, whether loose or tight, between the faculty and the administration. The degree administrative coupling with curriculum is of much less significance than the substance of that relationship. A distant administrator may have a more profound impact, albeit a negative or perhaps hidden one, than close coupling. That is, distance in structure does not guarantee uninvolvement. Closeness in structure does not always lead to curriculum influence. Arbitrariness from a distant administrator or a "close" one is equally inhibitive to teaching. Tight coupling may imply constraints or supports.

Expectations

Variations in the administrative structure and its application in a particular school can affect teachers' expectations of their own teaching and affect somewhat the level of the students' expectations of the teaching and learning process.

In the schools studied, these variations have little or no impact on what is demanded of students. In part, this is a result of administrators' unwillingness to evaluate specific teacher behaviors and assignments, for example, their willingness to read student papers. At only one school was there a direct relationship between the organizational structure and students' contributions to the generating and evaluating of school knowledge. Even at this school, this student participation was characterized more by assigned work involving questions to answer or exercise to work rather than tasks aimed at getting students into the production, comparison, evaluation, or presentation

of information. While some of this lack of variation in impact on students is attributable to administrative distance from instruction, part is derived from teachers' views of academic freedom. Teaching style, which includes interaction with students in content and testing, is even more sacrosanct than content as an area of academic freedom and teacher autonomy. Even teachers who share content planning and working within a collective teaching mode report that the attention given to course content in their planning is far greater than that given to instructional techniques or impacts on students. Only where teachers directly team teach do they seem to deal with the question of impact on students; this initiative arises from their personal concerns rather than from the administrative context.

The lack of variation in impact on students is also attributable in part to patterns of increased student employment outside of school. This is one of many areas of students' non-school life not addressed by the administrations studied. The jobs impact on students' willingness and ability to participate in school tasks and activities and in turn affect teachers' perceptions of the level of student engagement to expect on assignments.

Short-term Trade-offs

The adversarial relation established by administrators' concern for order and standardization, pressures of teachers unions and student rights, result in short-term trade-offs at each level (administrator, teacher, student), as each seeks to protect his or her survival in the institution. As one sacrifices personal goals (curiosity, knowledge-sharing, collegiality, for example) to institutional goals (paperwork, order, isolation, covering the material, earning credits), performance

above minimum standards becomes less likely. Variations in the administrative-faculty arrangement which threaten the authority or professional efficacy of one party induce these short-term trade-offs at the expense of constructive responses. An example of the effect adversarial relations among staff levels can have in lowering standards of professional conduct occurred at a school where the administrator's distrust of teachers led to arbitrary directives for teach tasks without teacher involvement in the decisions. To accommodate to the new directives, teachers reduced their classroom efforts.

Order and Control

Two primary goals of American public schooling, social control (credentials and internal order) and education, as respectively embodied in the professional roles of administrators and teachers are usually seen to conflict. Administrators justify their use of time and resources to keep the school "running smoothly" with the educative rhetoric that this promotes better education. Perhaps the most important finding of this research, and the one that inspired the title, is that when the control goals at each level supercede the educative goals, the result is to engender, or increase, rather than reduce disorder and disengagement from the process of schooling. This disengagement is then seen as a justification for more control. When the tension between goals of order and education are resolved in favor of educational purposes, teachers put up fewer walls between their own knowledge and the official knowledge of the classroom; they participate more in the creation of school knowledge; and their standard of participation tends to engage students in the learning process. When administrators, by constraint, neglect or inconsistency concentrate

personnel and economic resources of the schools on the production of course credits and diplomas at the expense of the teaching/learning process, teachers deliberately or unknowingly withdraw from the teaching/learning activities. Their lowered participation inspires student lethargy, disengagement or resistance. These in turn feed teachers' low expectations for the efficacy of their teaching and feed administrators' perceptions that what is needed is greater attention to control.

De-Skilling Teachers

Despite the perceptions of some organization theorists, the technological rationale for administrative order and control has not entirely overcome pressures (from school personnel and from communities) for schools to educate as well as certify laborers. However, to the extent that technological and control rationale continue to reduce students to a client status, they will feed back into the cycle of administrative concern for order by de-skilling teachers and decreasing the legitimacy of school knowledge for students. Secondary teachers, who unlike many elementary teachers have successfully resisted behaviorist models of instruction which make commercially produced materials "teacher-proof" with their pre-packaged objectives, classroom activities and evaluation instruments, have been less successful in resisting the de-skilling brought about by an adversarial administrative context. Their defensive teaching, designed to elicit student compliance through minimizing demands on students, is in many cases unwitting participation in their own de-skilling.

Schools and Human Interests

In terms of cultural reproduction, when looking at the interests served by public high schools, one cannot assume direct linkage between present institutional forms and present stratified social interests. Because the institutional forms of schooling in America represent an accretion of at least two hundred years of borrowing, and especially one hundred years of borrowing from industrial, psychological, military and business institutions in this country and abroad, the institutional forms must first be traced to the interests embodied in their origins. For example, the rational processes of administrators, exemplified more in the management of Forest Hills than of the other schools, derives from the social efficiency era in which school boards were dominated by the businessmen whose business and industrial accounting and production models were being emulated to cope with burgeoning school populations. That business elites feel less well served by schools today may be seen in the abandoning of public schools for private schools, even for non-elite classes and even at public expense, to produce skills and attitudes more amenable to economic elites than those they perceive to be coming out of public schools.

In addition to examining the interests embodied in the forms of schooling historically, one must examine the interests perpetuating these forms today. This is of special importance given the conflicting and mutually contradictory forms extant in most schools. Why has each been sustained? By inertia, tradition, political pressure, economic pressure, substitution for a rationale different from the original ones?

After spending a great deal of time in schools, one may seriously ask whether anyone's interest is served by them. While such a dire evaluation is not true of many of the school practices observed, there remains the question of whether the institution has taken on such a life of its own that no specific interests are fully served by it, but none are strong enough to counter its staying power. Such an observation calls into serious question simple theories of cultural reproduction which see the knowledge and knowledge forms of schools as representative of a dominant hegemony. Without a historical basis understanding for the establishment and persistence of these forms and without in-school analysis of their effects on participants, one cannot fully appreciate the variety of teaching and learning experiences within our high schools, the complex impact they have on students, and the forms resistance or acceptance of these forms may take.

NOTES ON PART I

CHAPTER 1

[1]See L. McNeil (1977), Chapter II.

CHAPTER 2

[1]Aaron Cicoruel, "Organizational Processes in Education: Field Research in Interaction Within Educational Organization," for the National Institute of Education (1975).

[2]Sarah Delamont and David Hamilton (1976).

[3]Harry Wolcott (1973).

[4]See McNeil (1977), Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of the research methods used in the original study.

PART II

FOUR HIGH SCHOOLS

Introduction to the Case Studies

The examination of each school will center on the manner of resolving the tension between the social control goals of the administration and the educative goals of the faculty. In three of the schools, the tension does indeed exist and is perpetuated by the administrative structure and its relation to the classroom. In the fourth school, the educative goals are shared by the administration, both in the history of the individuals who have filled those positions, and in the structure of the administration itself and in the structures it has helped to develop for collegial teacher relations and integrated curricula. Because the schools were selected specifically for variation from the first school studied, they have some marked differences in policy, procedure, reputation, school climate and, to many observers, efficacy. Because they are all from the same general area, they share many attributes as well.

Before spotlighting the differences, it will be useful to point out the commonalities. Three of the schools are similar in size and in community size. All four serve fairly homogeneous student populations, mainly white, middle-class students. All of the schools have some students from poorer families, including families which receive federal or county assistance, and the largest includes families from two federal housing projects. A small number of students at each school is eligible for school lunch assistance. All the districts include some upper-middle class families, with parents who are professionals or wealthy business people. Much of the upper level of

income, however, is provided by two-worker families, where neither parent alone earns an extremely high income. The parents in all four districts tend toward government, university, small business, or service sector employment. The industrial base of the counties represented tends to fall outside these four high schools' boundaries, except for an assembly plant and locally-owned light industry. Agriculture is a principal employment of many families at Freeburg and Maizeville.

Perhaps most significant for organizational analysis is the common legal base shared by the four schools. All are within the same state, and thus have the same state guidelines for curriculum, graduation requirements, faculty certification, administrator certification, and building specifications.

Each faculty is represented by a teacher union, with all having the same constraints on administrative-faculty roles. For example, according to the union contracts, no faculty member has the authority to hire, dismiss or evaluate other faculty. Administrative personnel do not hold union membership at any of these schools, and department chairs are considered faculty. At each school, rewards and sanctions are spelled out by the unions and are constant across the four schools: transfers, lay-offs and dismissals due to budgetary considerations are to be based on seniority; probationary teachers are to be evaluated each year, with three years the usual probationary period. Experienced (tenured) teachers are to be evaluated periodically, but there is no merit system of pay. Pay increments depend on years of teaching experience, usually within that school system, and years and degrees of graduate education. Salary is the usual point of contention in contract negotiation, and it is common for teachers to work without a

contract while bargaining disputes are being negotiated or sent to meditation or arbitration. Class size, course load and additional duties such as coaching are specified in the contract; any duties above the minimum load (usually four classes per semester plus specified hall or study hall duty) are reimbursed, including sponsorship of extra-curricular activities, attending meetings or serving on committees beyond the regular faculty or departmental meetings.

While these union-based conditions of work appear "normal," it is important to mention them precisely because so many teachers in this country work without any affiliative arrangement or with only affiliations not recognized for collective bargaining, such as the NEA in many Southern states. Unionization of faculty occurred within the professional careers of the present faculty at the observed schools, and within their tenure has moved from innovative, and in the minds of administrators often radical, organizations, to more conservative, taken-for-granted agents for narrow tasks such as pay-bargaining. Occasionally, a dismissal or hiring issue will be brought by the union grievance mechanisms, but at all the schools, the primary function is to bargain for pay and seniority issues. This same framework for employee relations takes on different characters at the three schools although the formal contractual relation is remarkably similar.

The schools also share a lack of serious discipline problems. That the administrative staff is so disproportionately attuned to discipline problems at three of the schools does not appear to be merited by the conduct of students as observed over a semester. The schools have virtually no violence; few, if any, teachers or students feel unsafe. Despite expectations raised by stories in the national press, no unemployed drop-outs roam the halls extorting lunch money or selling

drugs. Students seem remarkably prompt and well-behaved at the four schools, though administrators at all four talk about tardiness as a major problem. The primary problems are skipping school or selectively skipping classes. Drug usage is a presence at all these schools, though only among very small numbers of students and in less evidence than alcohol. The drug of choice among youth of this brewery state tends to be beer. While teenage drinking and teenage driving are a concern state-wide, and student talk is full of drinking stories, most seem to confine their drinking to after-school hours and weekends. Few students come to school drunk or stoned, and drug sales, with their accompanying strong-arm tactics, theft rings and cohort of spaced-out students are absent or minimal at these schools. At all but Nelson High, carelessness and indifference among students is the prevailing "discipline" problem.

The schools also share strong tax bases and a legacy of strong support for education in the state. Their tax bases differ, as will be noted, but the state as a whole supports public education well, not only at the elementary and secondary levels, but in the establishment of a strong network of technical, undergraduate and graduate campuses. A majority of students at each school will enroll in post-high school education and a majority will earn a degree. Most of these will choose to attend a state college or university, with the three smaller schools also sending a good many students to the technical and vocational schools, for either technical certification or preparation for later college work.

The schools are also similar in a lack of emphasis on competition, excellence, ability group tracking or other differential programs. The emphasis at all four is on the middle level of students, with the

assumption that high achieving students will "make it on their own" (Some remedial or drop-out preventive program at each school reaches small numbers of lowest achieving students.) Unlike elementary school attention to child development, these high school teachers almost without exception discuss student abilities as static. Student differences are rarely discussed; when they are, the discussion is very general (as in "we have a lot of kids who just can't read,") and is usually couched in the assumption that the way a child is at present is the way he or she will be always (for example, "he is not very good at taking tests," or "she doesn't pay attention well.") At none of the schools, is there a systematic or programmatic concern for increasing students' skills, for changing students' habits, for an active, dynamic model of learning and development. Individual teachers who belie this generalization will be noted, but the generalization holds at the school and departmental levels. The students' ability levels are held to be their upper limits, the maximum a teacher can expect, rather than the minimum from which the teacher is to work with the student to build and improve.

Such minimum standards are more obviously prevalent among behavioral mastery and competency models in vogue in elementary schools. At all four of these high schools, the teachers think of themselves as professionals, as teachers, in the model of college instructors with expertise in a subject area. They find behaviorist reduction of content and instructional technique empty and limiting and have successfully avoided this type of deskilling.[1] As will be noted, many of them have not avoided the deskilling that comes with teaching in a school that subordinates educative goals to social control efforts. This will be the subject of the concluding section of this report. It is

mentioned here to emphasize that all these schools follow a traditional secondary instructional model of teacher as subject-matter expert, as contributor and sometimes creator of knowledge. Their methods of teaching stem more from the ways they were taught and the evolution of their personal styles than from fads or innovations introduced by university departments of education, commercial producers of materials and tests, or inservice speakers.

One reason these teachers are secure in their methods is that all are experienced teachers. Social studies in Wisconsin high schools seems to be a predominantly male domain; there were three women in addition to the woman observed who taught social studies at these schools, but their courses or part-time status fell outside the design of the study. These schools have stable faculty because of declining or stable enrollments. In the case of this project, the stable group of faculty happens to be mostly men.

The schools share one other attribute which made them appropriate to the study. The research was designed to find out how school knowledge is shaped in the normal, day-to-day life of a high school. To discover the regularities of knowledge distribution in schools, it was necessary to select schools which were not experimental, which were not under a federal or state intervention, which were not piloting new commercial or university-supplied curricula. Most of all, it was desired that the schools be operating under their usual budgets, not supplemented by funds for special programs unavailable to "regular" United States high schools. All of these schools fit the pattern of schools going about their usual business. Two had some changes deliberately underway, in program revision and building construction, and one was undergoing involuntary changes brought on by declining enroll-

ments. But these changes arose from their usual situation and were not imposed or introduced from outside interventions. Studying schools that lack special funds or programs is essential if we are to move from curriculum research which measures the impact of experimental interventions (thus focusing on student achievement measures) to curriculum research which centers on what the school provides for the children. As federal and other outside sources of revenue become more scarce for public schools, it will be even more important to understand what is usual and what is possible given local budgets and resources.

In summary, the schools share similar teaching staffs (at least in social studies departments), student populations, union contracts, resource bases, and a lack of special interventions or innovations. Their differences then are heavily shaped by their histories, by varied structures, and by response of personnel to those structures.

CHAPTER 4

FOREST HILLS HIGH

Forest Hills High best embodies the classic administrator-teacher split. The teachers at this school thought of themselves as professionals in their subject fields; to them, the administrators are intellectual lightweights, concerned with keeping order in the halls and with processing students through required credits to graduation. The split was so marked, by the arrangement of the building, by staff patterns of socializing, by the use of time, by the substance of announcements and other communications between the two levels of personnel, that the administration seemed totally divorced from classroom and curricula. Despite these distances, the teachers justified their treatment of students and course content by citing administrative practices and shifts in policy which had significantly altered their institutional context and had undermined their ability to teach. Although the school fit the classic model of single-teacher classrooms in a school where administrators leave content to teacher discretion, the teachers felt that this laissez-faire model applied only to their lack of support, not to administrator constraints.

Forest Hills High was the site of the earlier ethnographic study of the treatment of economics information in reguired social studies classes. It has been described in detail in Making Knowledge Inaccessible, the monograph reporting that research, and in articles on the strategies teachers use to control students[1] and on the impact of these

teaching strategies on the students.[2] The questions raised by the teachers' rationale provided the impetus for the present research, which included a return to the school for analysis of the administrative content. Since the other three high schools were selected for specific ways in which they varied from Forest Hills, Forest Hills will be discussed for itself, and for its typical arrangement with management-oriented administrators and teachers removed from management but fairly autonomous over their course content and instructional methods. At Forest Hills, it was found that the treatment of economics information did not differ significantly from that of other types of historical information, that economics was formally an area of extensive study. The extensive treatment of the topic, however, was not indicative of its impact on students. The teachers were controlling access to information in order to elicit minimum participation from the students; the students, in turn, were suspecting the validity of the information but silently in order to raise no conflicts that could jeopardize their grade in this required course. Both groups were bracketing their personal information and questions in order to preserve their own efficiencies.

Several questions arose related to the administration: how did the teachers get away with their pattern of instruction in a school, and a school system where the community supported high quality education and paid for it with high school taxes? How much were the teaching strategies grounded, as the teachers claimed, in indifferent and constraining administrative policies? Were there other schools where the pattern of low expectations demonstrated among teachers and students at Forest Hills was alleviated or minimized by a more supportive admin-

istrative context? For the answers to the first two questions, it was necessary to return to Forest Hills to investigate the administrative context in more detail.

The School and the Community

Forest Hills High School is an old, established high school, once known as one of the best high schools in the nation. It serves a predominantly white, middle-class neighborhood in a midwestern city. The neighborhood immediately surrounding the school is made up of families, with most of the parents working in white-collar jobs. Small business owners, tradespeople, government employees, and retirees also live in the neighborhood. Also in the school's district are a housing project for low-income families and some poor working-class neighborhoods. Typical of the midwest, there are less dramatic ranges of wealth and poverty than in many parts of the country, and the casual dress of students minimizes social class differences. The few minority students are black or Asian, with fewer hispanics and American Indians. School taxes are high; support for quality education is strong in this neighborhood and throughout the region.

Several years prior to the observations, the school had been changed from a predominantly college-preparatory school to a more comprehensive high school, complete with a vocational wing. This change had occurred when the city's downtown high school had been closed in a political shuffle that included building a new high school in a wealthy new neighborhood and shifting downtown students to Forest Hills. These downtown students came from an excellent school and demonstrated a range of test scores similar to that of Forest Hills' students. However, because the downtown district included the housing project and other poor and minority areas, the teachers at Forest Hill were sure

their school "would never be the same." Nationally, the effects of integration on white and minority children were debated. Forest Hills got into the debate when the press picked up on the emotional resistance to the boundary shift and when a doctoral student in educational administration used the shift as his dissertation topic. Teachers at Forest Hills and the downtown high school and at the feeder junior highs were polled as to their expectations of student performance when the two school populations were mixed; students were surveyed as well about the differences in ability, family income and student participation levels they anticipated from the students from "the other school." The students anticipated few differences, but the teachers all believed the downtown students would have worse attendance and academic records. The professional decision was to build the vocational wing, with added caveats to look into changes needed in regular academic subjects as well to accommodate the new student population.[3]

To add to the Forest Hills teachers' feeling that their once-great school was changing, charges of discrimination led the school board to do away with ability-group tracking of students. Two of the teachers observed had previously taught upper-track students, and derived their chief satisfaction from the independent assignments and group projects and lively discussions characteristic of the upper-track classes. When the classes were made homogeneous, the teachers decided they could no longer teach effectively, that the students could no longer learn. They talked about individual differences as long as those were reflected in tracking, but did not build their courses on individual differences once those differences were together in the same room. Instead, they adopted the policy of lecturing rather than having students participate in generating or evaluating information.

The other significant change in the teachers' mind was the students' perceptions of the legitimacy of school practices. Prior to the late sixties, the staff was held in some esteem and students valued school experiences which would help them get into good colleges or build a resume for a successful job. Students, according to the teachers, had seen school work as instrumental to their own future good and so had participated with cooperation and even enthusiasm. Protests against the Vietnam War ended that cooperative spirit. Students openly challenged or rejected teachers' interpretations of American roles in the war; they cited television news, friends' experiences, college students' protests, books and magazine articles as their sources for legitimate information on the subject of the war. Anti-war protests and the administrations' attempts to restrict speakers on campus or to keep controversy out of school papers, led to students' concern for their rights, both in substantive issues of free speech and in symbolic issues of arm bands, hair length, and so on.

The student rights issue eventually produced a student bill of rights for the city's schools, including such protections as due process in serious discipline cases, open records, grievance procedures, and limits on administrative policies on free speech.

For the observed teachers, these years were threats to their authority over content and to their authority over order in their classroom. Their response was, again, to limit student assignments and to build more and more of the course around lecturing.

While lecturing is of itself often interesting and productive, in these classes it became the teachers' way of limiting students' access to written materials. Two of the teachers required almost no

reading, except for one book report; the third assigned a few pages in a survey text each night and gave occasional quizzes over the reading. Little or no writing was required during the course, though the course observed was the highest-level required social studies class, and the students juniors in high school.

The autonomy of the teachers over content and resources derived from a broad framework of legal and bureaucratic requirements. The teachers' union, of which these teachers were members, negotiated contracts specifying teaching and order-keeping duties, salary, pay for extra activities, class size and other specific working conditions. These teachers taught four classes each, usually the same course all day long, or maybe two or three course preparations during the year. The state outlined only very broad graduation requirements, and the city and state requirements combined regulated only half the credits a student needed for graduation; the rest were left up to the individual high school and its students.

The city's school board had approved several years prior to the observations a three-semester United States history sequence in high school, with a broad set of objectives within which teachers at each school could select texts and auxiliary materials suitable for their students, using criteria, testing methods and instructional techniques chosen by the departments or individual teachers. Principals at the schools left these matters up to the teachers, so long as bureaucratic requirements were observed. One such rule was the taking of a human relations course on becoming sensitive to racial issues before chairing a committee on textbook selection. Within the latitude of these guidelines, teachers had great discretion over course materials and procedures.

No organized community pressure groups monitored teacher decisions or challenged content. Nor was the state education agency vulnerable to such pressures, except the tradition that social studies teachers be trained to know about cooperatives.

Order in the Classrooms

Against these historical events in their school, the teachers observed for the original study were attempting to teach American history to juniors in a way that minimized frustrations to themselves and elicited minimum cooperation from their students. These historical events were only vaguely known, and not understood for their impact, when the original observations were begun. That study was not to be a study of classroom interactions, already too abundant and too inconclusive as determinative of school knowledge. It was to be an analysis of curriculum content and curriculum materials, not as content analysis of texts and curriculum guides, but as investigation into the curriculum as lived by the students and the teacher in the classroom.

The research strategy proved apt for studying in-use curriculum, but led inevitably to inclusion of the impact teacher-student interaction has on the content, and the reciprocal impact of the content on the patterns of interaction. With the focus on economic content, and the hypothesis that economics information would be treated differently from other kinds of historical information, the observations began with two classes and later expanded to a third teacher's class. One teacher was chosen for his expertise in economics; he also taught the school's economics elective. During the planning of the research, it was expected that noting all talk during the classes would be extremely difficult, because inquiry-based social studies had become widespread

The hypothesis of the study was that economics information would be more fragmented, superficial, incoherent or absent than would the study of social, political and biographical topics during the same historical period. The study was to compare the treatment of economics information with the treatment of these other areas. The comparison did not materialize, however, because economics received the same treatment as the other topics. That treatment was the presentation through lectures of facts, lists, abbreviated explanations, unelaborated abstract slogans and other disjointed pieces of information. While they distributed a token book report list of very interesting and varied titles, the students were not expected to read, write, generate or compare information, look up information on their own, raise questions or add information in class. One teacher, a coach, lectured every day from an outline printed on transparencies projected by overhead project onto a screen in front of the room. His tests were open-notebook, factual, short-answer tests, with unclear directions and non-negotiable answers, even to the point of disallowing synonyms for words from the transparencies. When two good students' parents complained about the testing procedure, he reminded the class that he was a "professional historian," not a "jock," and turned the complaint into an adhominem argument.

This teacher had nine sections on his outline, five of which dealt with economics topics. An examination of the outline would have given the impression of extensive economics study. Closer inspection would have revealed that even extended topics such as the Depression, on which he spent several weeks, were reduced to lists of causes, names and dates, unelaborated jargon from professional economists. Only the film The Grapes of Wrath joined the fragments of information into a meaningful composite. This teacher did not require students to read and often did

not give out books at the beginning of the semester. He rewarded attendance with open-notebook tests; most test scores ranged between 35-55%, so an extreme curve was necessary to assure a reasonable number of passing grades.

The other two teachers used much less extreme methods, but had equally tight control of course content. The woman teacher used witty put-downs to squelch student comment, though she did require a few pages of reading each night and called on students to answer questions from the reading. She had carefully planned her lectures and asides and set such a tone of efficiency and "cover the material" speed that students learned very early that even an enlightened comment would risk being labeled "disruptive" or mark the student as one who wasted class time.

The third teacher, the economics teacher who also taught the history course, was much more casual, much less paced toward covering an exact amount of material each day. But he too restricted content just as tightly. Like the others, he did not ask students to add ideas, and often rejected what few student contributions were made. Students could talk and joke in his class, but they could not greatly affect course content. While the woman teacher, Miss Langer, viewed history as "the story" and her job as being to convey that story efficiently to students, Mr. Harris stopped to give extended descriptions, to mention issues as well as facts and so gave more three-dimentional portrayals of events through his lectures. Both were conscientiously trying to share large amounts of material with their classes.

Whereas their different teaching styles suggest slightly differ-

ent patterns of interaction, the resulting course content was less varied. All of these teachers omitted content which was controversial, which was so complicated as to require in-depth treatment, or which was current. They saw "current events" as events which happened during their adult lifetime, though events five years before had occurred when their students had been in elementary school. They further viewed current news as a waste of time, since no consensus had emerged in their interpretation. They did feel that past events could be explained through a consensus interpretation, thus "the story," and so conveyed as representing what "we Americans" know about the subject.

In addition to eliminating current and controversial topics, they frequently reduced complicated topics to items in a list. This flattening or fragmenting of information happened when the information was reducible to facts. Some topics were more complex; the teacher might want the student to know about a certain event or institution but be unable or unwilling to explain it. Instead, he or she might "mystify" the topic, mentioning its importance but explaining that it was unknowable or inappropriate for consideration at that time. Thus such topics as the Federal Reserve or the banking system would be mentioned as being very important but remote from the student, remaining a mystery though listed in the notebook.

Whether mystified or omitted, matters of controversy were rarely dealt with as issues, as matters having more than one interpretation that should be explored. Instead, the teachers used the editorial "we" as in "During the Depression, we Americans, . . ." or "we are all Progressives now." If a student intimated that there was less than consensus, two of the teachers would ascribe the alternative interpretation to "cynicism."

These patterns of control were reflected upon by the teachers in taped interviews, and by the students in response to a semi-structured questionnaire inquiring into their knowledge of economic events in the news. Until the interviews began, the classroom observations seemed to point to passive students being socialized into consensus social studies information by conservative, moderately educated teachers typical of social studies stereotypes. From a Marxist perspective, it would seem that the knowledge admissible to these classrooms, favoring consensus models of historical interpretation and loyalty to American institutions without reflection or analysis, derived inevitably from ideologies embedded in the capitalist system and its schools. It became apparent from observing at other schools, partly in search of contrasts and counter-examples in order to test the validity of these observations, that other teachers in the same social system, indeed in the same school system, set very different limits on the information and student roles permitted in thier classrooms. At two other high schools, the teachers set students to looking up information in libraries, attending public meetings, interviewing citizens of the community and otherwise participating in generating and evaluating information. Their tests often asked students to take positions and defend them, with grades based on the thoroughness of the defense rather than the degree of concurrence with the teacher's position. These differences prompted investigation into the factors which shaped the patterns of knowledge control at Forest Hills.

From interviews and research into the history of the school, it became apparent that the teachers at Forest Hills felt their teaching styles to be their best accommodation to their institutional setting.

All had been in the school prior to the turmoils of the late sixties. Two had previously derived their status from teaching upper track students and sharing in the light of their scholarships and awards. They had objected to the de-tracking policy and had been the last high school in the city to comply with this district ruling. Most stratification analysis by social class (Keddie, Sharp and Green, and others) has documented that teachers will sacrifice their leastable students for their highest level students; the majority of teacher time and attention will be directed toward those students perceived as brightest or as having a future most compatible with the teacher's, whether the varied ability levels are in the same classes or not. This had clearly been the picture at Forest Hills, according to the teachers' recollections, prior to de-tracking. One teacher remembered how she assigned panel discussions and papers and projects to the "super bright" students. With the next level of students she was able to require some reading and writing. With what she called "the masses -- 90 to 120 I.Q.," school knowledge had to be "spoonfed," with teacher lectures the appropriate format because if "you sent them to the library, they'd just copy from an encyclopedia." The least bright group was given to the coach; for their credit in United States history they read the morning newspaper together.

After de-tracking, the traditional patterns of differential treatment did not hold at this school. These teachers had decided to impose their previous Level III ("the masses") pattern of control (lectures, objective tests, no reading, no writing) onto the entire group, thus sacrificing even the brightest students to the teacher's efficiencies of having no diverse assignments to create or grade. The redrawing of

the school's boundary to include the poorer neighborhood and cause the addition of the vocational wing added to their justifications for these instructional strategies.

The anti-war protests had threatened teachers in two ways. First, class was less efficient when students spoke up, especially when they wanted to debate a point to its resolution. More important was the threat to the teacher's authority as a source of valid knowledge. One teacher reflected that during this time the "really sharp kids" were "writing terrific papers," but they were becoming "self-indoctrinated." He went on to say that the students believed the information they gained through reading and research more than the lectures. He decided that they were too impressionable to read so extensively in controversial areas, and so decided he had rather require no papers rather than have students misled by their independent searches.

There were no doubt other factors such as their age and training and personal backgrounds which shaped these teachers' decisions regarding knowledge forms and content in their classes. They had been trained under college lecture methods which they emulated. Middle age caused one teacher to limit long assignments so he would, as he expressed, have energy for other things. He preferred to pour his limited energies into fine lectures. These other factors, however, are of less importance in the teachers' interpretations of their reasons for their methods.

In each instance, the de-tracking, the Vietnam War protests, they felt more alienated from their former sources of authority, and more threatened by an indifferent administration. That indifference became unwelcome intrusion in the de-tracking policy, which the teachers

felt undercut their ability to deal with student differences. They received no added materials, no added time to work out revised courses or to evaluate course offerings and assignments in light of the incoming students from lower income families or to deal with mixed-ability classes. They were sure that these changes would erode their ability to teach, but had no supports for altering or adapting their ways. Instead, they had to fashion their own efficiences within the new constraints. They chose to reduce their expectations of their students and of their teaching and to proscribe course content to a narrow set of lists and summaries.

Of special interest was the contrast between classroom content and the teachers' own knowledge of their subject. Despite Joint Council on Economic Understanding policies to the contrary, these teachers did not need more training or materials in order to deal with the economy in a more complex manner. In interviews, they revealed very complex knowledge of controversy, of future economic dislocations, of imperfect institutions, of complicated topics. They said in these interviews that to deal with these realities might make students cynical, as students had been during the Vietnam War protests. Time and their own energies did not allow for adequate time to discuss the controversial, complicated and sometimes unpleasant realities of American and world economics and politics, so they decided it was better to present a factual overview and let students discover the realities after they left school. The teachers, then, were bracketing their personal knowledge in order to get through the "official" knowledge of the course. In the concluding analysis, we will discuss this strategy as a kind of de-skilling, reducing the worker to a mechanism rather than a whole being whose self is participating in the creative work process. At this school,

the teachers were choosing de-skilling in exchange for the preservation of efficiencies and authority they saw as threatened by the administrative context.

Before going on to that context, it must be noted that the student interviews revealed a similar bracketing of personal information, including questions and opinions, upon entering the classroom. One of Miss Langer's students told me that at the first of the semester, he held the expectation that social studies meant discussing, so he had ventured comments and questions. Soon he was the object of her witty put-downs and wry comments; to preserve his "class participation" grade, he decided to remain silent. The silence appeared to be acquiescence when observed in the classroom. Only the interviews revealed that the students found the controlled knowledge suspect. About one-fourth appreciated their own lack of knowledge of history as compared to the teachers'. The remainder of the students questioned the methods of instruction and the validity of the information. Approximately one-third of the students in the observed classes were interviewed regarding their views of current economic topics in the news, study of economic-related subjects in previous years, their jobs, their opinions regarding predictions of resource scarcities, and their understanding of such economics jargon used in their classes as free enterprise and productivity. Unsolicited, but frequent, comments emerged during the interviews about the students' dissatisfaction with the course format which prevented discussion and the presentation of multiple perspectives. In class, most of the students sat passively, sometimes busy copying lecture and blackboard notes into notebooks (especially in tne class where words from the transparencies were required for test answers),

offering little challenge, few questions, few informal contributions. Most student participation took the form of banter in Mr. Harris' class, or answers to leading recitation questions in Miss Langer's class. Occasionally, a student would ask a procedural question such as the date of a test, the length of a book report, or the requirements for taking notes on a film. Otherwise, the teachers were remarkably proficient at keeping so much adolescent energy in acquiescence for forty-five minutes each day.

The complex responses to interview questions were not foreshadowed by student behaviors in class. Very few of these students were political, despite teacher admonitions to quit wanting to tear the system down. They had been young children during most of the American involvement in Vietnam and had only older people's stories to tell them of the protests in their own school during that time. They had no first-hand knowledge of the de-tracking or shift to a comprehensive high school. Therefore, they did not share the teachers' perceptions of the nature of the student body and needs for limited access to resources or discussion. They did have their own way of interpreting the situation.

The students who questioned the validity of the tightly-controlled content did so silently, many not aware that other students also held the course content suspect. Unlike the "lads" in Willis' Hammertown, whose working class resistance to school's socializing influences was collective, visible and filled with humor and open flaunting of school rules, these middle class students individually and unobtrusively carried out their own resistance. Many were actively deciding how much teacher-supplied information to accept, how much to reject, how much

to question or hold in suspension until some unspecified "later" time. Those who had politically active or informed parents, those who read, those who watched television news -- all these found themselves rejecting teacher information when a personal source of information contradicted it. A separate analysis of this negotiation of classroom efficiencies, "Negotiating Classroom Knowledge: Beyond Achievements and Socialization" (McNeil, 1981) describes in detail several students who deliberately and thoughtfully made decisions of when to speak out, especially in disagreement, and when to passively comply in order to get the course content. These decisions were active, conscious and in keeping with the students' understanding of their own interests. Many had appropriated the administrative concern for credentials and credits at the expense of knowledge and skills; they saw the short-term payoff of earning a high grade, by avoiding being called "disruptive," but did not often see the long-term costs of losing this chance to interact with abundant materials and trained teachers. They pointed to a "later" time, after graduation when they would be able to "find out for themselves" what they needed to know. These questions about the credibility of school knowledge cut across achievement levels, across the social class distinctions perceived by the teachers, across gender lines and other categories education researchers use to characterize student differences.

The effects of this pattern of negotiating their efficiencies were two-fold. One, it created a client mentality among the students. Unaware of the opportunity cost, of having to sit through so many hours of school without benefiting from the lessons, these students not only did not trust teachers' information. They had just

as little confidence in their own abilities to learn things on their own. When discussing ecology, job futures, inflation and other personal economic concerns, they expressed the vague hopes that "someday" "they will tell us" "what we need to know."

A second effect is the effect on the teachers' perceptions of their own sense of efficacy. Already feeling constrained by the administration, the teachers saw the students' passivity as evidence of their worst fears regarding the decline of the school as a result of de-tracking and boundary shifts. They had no sense of the student suspicions of course content. Instead, they saw minimal student efforts as evidence of limits of student abilities. They viewed these limits as liabilities to their effectiveness as teachers, as the upper limits to which students could reach. These limits of attention span, intelligence or experience were not the beginning point from which the teacher would add to skills and information; they were the restrictions within which teachers had to operate in preparing and conducting their classes. When they observed that a student had trouble reading history, they decided not that they needed to work more on skills, on the methods of reading historical material, but that they could no longer assign reading and thus would have to lecture more. An interview with a student who had been present the year of the de-tracking shed some light on the relationsihp between that policy change and student participation. Whereas the teachers saw the mixing of intelligence levels as diluting all student abilities, this former student recalled that peer pressure brought about reduced discussions: "The bright kids didn't want the dumb kids to have the answers. The dumb kids didn't want their friends to know they were dumb." So neither group spoke up. Just as the teacher accommodations to administrative

policies were hidden from the administrators, the student responses to knowledge restrictions and de-tracking had been misunderstood by the teachers. Likewise, the students had little idea that teachers were reacting to events in the history of the school several years prior to this year's junior class.

The structure of the school, with isolated single-teacher classes, individual achievement modes for student evaluation, and an administration emphasizing credits and order, kept the ironies of this cycle of lowering expectations from coming to light. The vulnerabilities in the cycle became apparent to an outside observer, but were invisible to the participants. The teachers' fears of student disruption made them tighten control of knowledge at the expense of engaging students in the learning process. This oversimplification of topics made the students in turn cynical about learning and lowered their expectations that anyting substantive was to be gained from the course. Their minimal responses sent signals to the teachers which seemed to confirm their low expectations of "today's students." The very autonomy which gave teachers their sense of professionalism and control over their courses prevented collective review of the program and its impact on the students, either at the departmental or administrative levels.[3]

The Administrative Context

It is doubtful that the principal of this school, or the assistant principal charged with oversight of social studies, knew what went on in these classes, beyond the simple fact that Mr. Schmidt used an overheard projector, or that Mr. Harris was jovial and fairly well-informed, or that Miss Langer was efficient. Yet the existence of these administrators and their policies helped shape decisions made

both by students and teachers in these classes just as though the administrators had formally intervened in the selection of instructional methods or curriculum resources.

Analysis of the administrative context will reveal how its structure reinforced this pattern of negotiating of minimum efficiencies. Forest Hills was the only high school studied to be a part of a bureaucratic school system having more than one high school and strong central office directives. The superintendent was known for being a tough negotiator with the teachers' union and for being in control of school policy. He enjoyed the support of the majority of the school board during the time of these observations. The system had in the recent past had subject matter supervisors at the district level and four geographic area supervisors as well. The subject matters supervisors were generally well respected by the classroom teachers and served as resources and advocates for teachers in their fields. Several of the city-wide programs in place during the study bore the mark of the planning of these subject matter supervisors, including social studies. Subject matter supervisors were phased out ostensibly for budgetary reasons; some returned to classrooms; others moved into other administrative positions in schools or in the central office.

Later, the superintendent eliminated two of the four geographic area supervisory positions, again supposedly for financial reasons, to cut central office staff which many in the community saw as top-heavy. Some months later in an extended interview in the city paper, upon leaving the superintendency, the superintendent explained that while cost-cutting made the consolidation of the four areas into two areas popular with citizens, the real benefit was to eliminate positions

based on identifiable constituencies and further centralize decision-making powers in his office.

The superintendent was not greatly respected by the teachers interviewed; when their opinion was solicited through a questionnaire regarding his potential replacement, one teacher wrote back to the committee that the selection was their job, not his. The superintendent's interests reflected the business community more than educators. He mirrored the superintendents Callahan (1962) describes who during the early days of industrial and school bureaucratization emulated executives rather than scholars. The superintendent often made news for his business associations and investments, occasionally for delinquent property taxes. In this system, far more than in the others observed, administrators moved in different social circles from classroom teachers. Part of the reason was salary; in a year when administrative merit raises averaged $2,200, the teachers almost went on strike over an offer of $100 across-the-board raises justified by claims of austerity.

The superintendent was very political but imposed rational modes on administrative decisions. He favored closing neighborhood schools with declining enrollments and was accused of closing first those schools that served as the center of neighborhood organizations and political activities. Whether this is a justified accusation, it is clear that he did not respond favorably to such teacher- and parent-initiated movements as the drive for open classroom schools, though a small number of elementary schools were permitted to pilot open classroom projects if the pilot programs could be done within existing budgets. Parents, teachers, and a few enthusiastic principals contributed time, money,

and energy to create classroom environments in which an open classroom model of instruction could be tried. Later, these schools were among the first closed.

To monitor the activities of principals and area coordinators below him, the superintendent in conjunction with the school board initiated an evaluation program with Management by Objectives, for which he became well known in administrator circles throughout the country. He generated teacher hostility by trying to implement Teaching by Objectives as well, but this was successfully fought by the union as unprofessional and demeaning. The MBO system for administrators had both symbolic and real effects. Symbolically, it made administrators appear to have rationalized goals related to the total school program and gave the impression of helping to improve the schools or at least the job performance. The real impact was that the MBO's could be differentially structured to demand less of favored principals, for example, to influence merit evaluations.

Each administrator would meet with his superior at the beginning of the year, or over the summer, to set the objectives for the year. Both would have to agree, as in a contract. Toward the end of the year, they met to see if goals had been met. Teachers expressed the concern that their views and students' views of ways principals could help the school program were not considered. They suspected that politics weighed heavily into the setting of easy objectives when it suited the superior. At one point in negotiations, personnel from the teachers' union estimated that the equivalent of more than one and a half administrator years was spent on formulating and evaluating management objectives.

The principal of Forest Hills had one objective to create a new student handbook. He solicited ideas from students, staff, and parents before compiling the standard handbook of attendance rules, graduation requirements, disciplinary procedures, school colors, maps and song. The teachers saw it as a task more appropriate to a secretary or student committee. They chafed that it merited a bonus, that the principal used the planning procedures for public relations while ignoring real problems in the school. After his attention to rules in the handbook, he often failed to back teachers in enforcing them. Once when he saw a teacher trying to enforce the rule preventing students from loitering near the main entrance (and thus intimidating adult visitors to the school), a key rule following the years of Vietnam war protests, the principal joked "Kids will be kids," and walked away, leaving the teacher embarrassed and ineffectual in front of the unmoved students. This attention to creating rules, requiring teachers to enforce them, but not supporting teachers who tried, generated teacher resistance not only in the hallways but in the classrooms as well.

Teachers also felt slighted by the changes such as de-tracking which originated at administrative levels without adequate recognition of new demands made on teachers to change or reevaluate programs. De-tracking was the most prominent because it was fought by the teachers, and their concerns raised during the debate were never addressed. De-tracking was based on the assumption of meeting individual student needs rather than labeling students by broad ability categories. Teachers complained that having these differences together hurt their teaching, then failed to acknowledge those differences or deal with them in assignments or explanations after de-tracking was in place. They tended

to take students' lower limits (where they were at that point) as their upper limits, as static rather than developmental characteristics, and therefore as brakes on teacher influences. They were convinced that de-tracking diluted their ability to teach, unaware of peer relations influencing students' passivity, and uninformed on what the specific differences were, in many cases, among their students. The formal rationale of dealing with individual differences was the administrative justification for avoiding charges of racism and discrimination inherent in the tracking system. Yet neither the formal nor the informal rationale gave administrators impetus to review the homogeneous grouping after a year or two of the new plan to assess the impact on students of different races, income levels or abilities. The teachers resented this attention to pro forma policies that ignored the classroom realities created by them. The only accommodation to the de-tracking made by the administration was to make sure that three levels of texts were available to the teachers, levels already in the school because of previous tracking. The outline series for weaker students was actually harder to understand than narrative history and was more frequently used by bright students reviewing for tests. The middle level text was dull and according to Miss Langer, devoid in factual depth. The upper level book was an old Oscar Handlin college text, published when the students were babies and covering only the first two-thirds of the course outline.

No departmental structure existed to overcome administrative indifference to classroom concerns. The chair was elected, although one teacher told of being asked by the principal to accept the chairmanship as an appointment because the principal was "unsure" he could

work with the elected chair. The teacher demured, assuring the principal that he could work with the man if he gave it a try. The chairman handled ordering of materials, assigning of courses and rooms, but had no authority in staff evaluation or program development. A very fragmented department of individuals, the social studies teachers included several men who coached sports after school and others like Mr. Harris and Miss Langer of the old school who saw themselves as scholars and lecturers. Courses were often taught by the same teacher for years, with a course being seen over time as one teacher's turf. Those who taught the same course sometimes coordinated their courses in order to schedule films together, but otherwise little team effort existed. One assistant principal explained that all history teachers in the city followed the same schedule so that transferring students could be "at the same place" in the new class. From observing three history departments in the city, I concluded this was not the case; none of the others taught by lecture or by chronology, as did the Forest Hills teachers, whose chronologies rarely coincided despite weekly reading lists and occasional films. The small number of students transferring during the semester between classes or schools was inadequate to make this a basis of policy anyway.

The teachers' main view of the administration was its distance in terms of support, its intrusions in adding constraints and work loads, and its undermining of previous reward structures derived from teaching tracked classes. Prior to de-tracking, Miss Langer had drawn her greatest satisfaction from teaching the brightest students, giving them responsibility for searching out and presenting and comparing information. She and other teachers had taken pride in watching

good students become interested in history, in seeing them excel and go on to good schools. Two attorneys who graduated fifteen years prior to the study reflected on the fierce competition, the lively assignments, the feeling that these students would go out to become successes at the universities and in their professions. That cohort of students was not totally impressed with all instruction at the school, but the questioned its legitimacy less than present students because they could see the school's rewards as instrumental to their futures. In turn, their energies and efforts rewarded teacher effort. Their descriptions of the activity and energy generated by their teachers and fellow students in learning projects bore no relation to the passive classes observed. After hearing the intense questioning of school policies and content during the Vietnam war, teachers saw their own authority over information eroded, further so after these Nixon supporters faced students knowledgeable about Watergate. They responded by eliminating Vietnam and Watergate from the chronologies of contemporary United States history. With each retrenchment, some of the former student-teacher interaction was lost.

Administration attention to order also was reinforced during those protest days, even though it must be restated that the students observed in the field study were not those protesting students nor did they have memory of them. The assistant principal shed some light on how administrators responded to these shifts in teacher and student effort. Mr. Burger, a very traditional man, much like the pricipal and superintendent, spoke in numbers, in drop-out percentages. He noticed that "half the teachers need jacking up." He expressed no ideas about how to increase teacher effort, just that it should be done.

He said that he met with each department under his jurisdiction three or four times per year, then retracted, saying that that was the ideal but that the actual meetings were rare because of the number in the social studies department that had coaching or evening course (driver's education and the like) responsibilities.

The formal evaluation procedures centered on the teacher and corresponding assistant principal. The two met in the fall for a preparatory conference reviewing the teacher's goals for the year. These were not strictly management (or teacher) objectives, but areas of general concern such as discipline, preparation and so on. The assistant principal said these talks ranged from thirty seconds to thirty minutes. Then the assistant principal was to visit the teacher's class three or four times during the year. At an ending evaluation conference, the administrator would present the teacher with his evaluations in teaching ability, professional knowledge of the subject and interest in it, clarity of assignments, control of pupils (note the word control rather than a word more respectful of students as participants rather than objects), and "daily preparation and continuity." The teacher would sign a concurrence or write out an objection or amending statement and sign that for the personnel file.

Mr. Harris explained how the procedures worked in reality. A different assistant principal visited his class two or three times during the year, once for longer than just stepping in for a few minutes. Mr. Harris was flattered at first to read the very favorable evaluation and felt that he had been recognized for his efforts. His pleasure changed to amusement when he read "excellent" beside "use of audio-visual equipment." "As you know, Mrs. McNeil, I never use

a-v equipment," he laughed. "I have no idea where that came from." Perhaps another teacher's evaluation, or the ritual evaluation based on assumptions of what a conscientious, pleasant teacher would do.

The same assistant principal who wrote this evaluation differed from the dominant managerial mode among administrators in the school: he saw himself not as an advocate of bureaucratic rules and credits but of students. His views on minimum expectations among teachers and students came from being a member of a minority and from being the parent of children who attended a different high school. He saw curriculum as inadequate as the result of the impersonality of the school and of the teacher's unwillingness to factor students' personal lives into their expectations of students. He added to his teacher evaluations comments about how he saw teachers interact with students in the halls. He viewed counselors and other administrative personnel as paper-shufflers, unable to see students in this large high school as individuals. He said sometimes students came by his secretary's office just to have someone say good morning to them or to ask how they looked that day. He valued his role as a grade level principal, which included following one class through all four years as the other assistant principals did, more than his assignment over a group of subject matter areas. As grade level principal, he got to know students, especially those frequently in trouble or having family problems. He tried to become an advocate to the teachers for these students. He saw no concrete way of improving poor teacher performance or rewarding outstanding teachers, saying as most of the administrators did, "I've seen a teacher have 40-45 kids and still teach every one of them."

He favored de-tracking for its avoidance of potential discrimination problems, but said that some students might get "lost" in mixed

classes. Then he said that perhaps coming to high school was a chance to get lost, to hide for some students, a chance to change and start over.

His biggest problems with the school centered on the lack of reality. He said that teachers refused to deal with the effects of peer relations on their courses or with the large number of students holding outside jobs. He said that the students worked in order to have money to spend, that few saved it for future education, and many had trouble saving for cars and other major purchases because of their large entertainment expenses. His own children and their friends made hundreds of dollars each month and had "nothing to show for it." Teachers' ignorance of students' values prevented them from relating their courses to students in a way that would engage them.

His other concern was with the lack of reality faced by students. He estimated that 80% were born in the state, just as 80% of the teachers had been born and raised in the state. The city's nice neighborhood shopping areas kept people from having to cross town to shop and thus to be forced to meet varieties of people. He thought that neither the students nor the teachers had enough experience with the "real world" to be able to understand it. As he put it, "the kids are working, drinking, playing more, and the teachers are blissfully unaware. They know kids won't do as much homework but think it's because of attitudes rather than lifestyle changes." He said he could not get teachers interested in what students' lives were like.

In this particular school, he also attributed teachers' minimum efforts to their feelings of intimidation from the educational level of many parents in the district, not because of direct community pressure, but because the feelings of inadequacy made teachers pre-disposed not

to try anything new. Most tried, in his estimation, to keep a low profile in order to keep parents out of the school. The irony came in teachers' wanting parents to be involved in their child's discipline problems, just not the course content.

His view of teachers echoed that of administrators interviewed at the later schools: "Teachers can do anything in this school. Good kids, good resources. It's the administrators whose hands are tied." For teachers who teach well, he saw thank you as reward enough. He said he tried to give good teachers visibility and public praise. He theorized that the ones who burn out "are the ones who don't get the strokes." He said that he preferred this form of reward himself. The teachers would have pointed out that he had merit raises, promotions and ultimately a principalship as rewards in his career structure.

As for students' relation to authority structures in schools, he traced their respect for authority in school to their upbringing. Children fight with their parents over who will walk a block to the store for an onion, in his analysis, without a concept of obedience. "In the '60s the parents let kids do their own thing, let the rope out. They haven't pulled it back yet, though they have discovered, 'Hey, these kids aren't as smart as we thought they were.'"

This assistant principal demonstrated the possibilities for individualizing one's response to structural forms. He also had management objectives, had formal teacher evaluations, had assignments to take charge of a grade level and oversight of certain academic areas. But for him, the formal aspects of schooling merely provided a framework within which he might advance his career, might help some students overcome the anomie of a large high school, might remind teachers that their students had lives outside of school. His

being a member of a minority allowed him certain variations from the very standardized expectations of administrators in this school, and his relative effectiveness with students (as compared with some of the more rules-oriented administrators) helped justify his imposing his own style on his work.

The humane intentions of this one administrator found outlet in one-to-one relations with students with whom he came in contact over discipline or over conflicts with the guidance office regarding schedule change requests or other personal adjustments to the school. On a broader plane, the impersonal structure which he saw causing problems for some lonely students also prevented his channeling his concerns into policy. The domain of the teacher was clearly the classroom, the content, the testing and grading. He could work with grade level issues and particular students, but had no means short of the teacher evaluations and classroom visits to affect instruction. That he did not fully take advantage of those powers delegated to him was evident in his evaluation of Mr. Harris' use of audio-visual equipment. He assigned to non-school origins, such as neighborhood and cultural isolation, or parental laxness or student jobs, problems in motivating students and teachers. He did not view inadequacies in either group as originating within the shcool, but as reflecting within the school the values dominant in their out-of-school lives. While he and the other assistant principals and the principal had considerable discretion even within the union contract to oversee program development and teacher quality, they chose not to. His story of the principal's view of curriculum as course credits is telling. He explained the chain of command in the developing of new courses, and told of taking a depart-

ment's request for a new course to the principal. "The principal said it was okay; he had no interest in this subject except to say that 'of course, there won't be any more courses added unless something has been dropped because of enrollments and budget cuts.'" He thus had no expectation that program improvements would originate with the administration. The passive acquiescence to the fact that some teachers are good and some are bad voiced by this very frank administrator has its counterpart in two of the other three schools studied.

Interestingly, though the teachers welcomed administrator distance when it left them autonomous in their classrooms, they rejected this distance when it implied acceptance of a bad situation, as with a failure to support discipline efforts, or when it implied lack of concern for problems, especially those problems caused by administrative fiat. This classic split between duties and roles in this school is typical of many high schools. It does not always have to mean minimum expectations all around. At this particular school, the historical events which led to administrative policy changes were events which simultaneously eroded teacher authority and expectations. Prior to that time, the teachers recalled, and this has been somewhat verified by talking with a small number of their former students, that there was a time when there was less of a wall between personal knowledge and the official knowledge of the classroom. They recalled a time when they demanded more of themselves and of their students of all levels but especially of the upper ability groups. They reminisced about a time when they felt efficacy as teachers, as having the ability to add to student skills and knowledge, with the students' participation. In short, the faculty members interviewed remembered a time of higher

expectations. In their mind, the lower expectations they and their students were bringing to the classroom stemmed not from the "times," from changing job and family patterns, but from administrative unconcern for that teaching function. Like the assistant principal who turned teacher evaluations into innocuous ritual, the teachers did not take full advantage of their autonomy: Mr Schmidt was in line to chair the textbook selection committee, after years of funding delays. He did not convene the committee because he did not plan to assign reading and because he had no interest in taking the requisite human relations course needed for convenors of text selection committees. The text selection process was not seen in the context of comparison with teachers in states where central office or even state-wide adoption decisions preclude teacher choice. Instead, it was seen as necessary for Miss Langer and Mr. Harris, but without great hopes that an adequate text for high school students would be available on contemporary history; it was seen as a needless chore by Mr. Schmidt.

No one such decision was determinative enough in changing their situation to merit extraordinary effort. Their greater task was to carve out, between student indifference and administrative distance, their own efficiencies, their own means of maintaining authority in the classroom. In their goal of sustaining an educative function in a school where credentials were more the order of official policy, they chose to concentrate on building their lectures. Ironically, the lecture methods chosen often turned into defensive teaching (see section nine), or into watered down topics or assignments in order to elicit student compliance. By controlling knowledge in order to control student behavior, they engendered student resistance that they had not expected and in some cases were not yet aware of. The student cynicism

toward learning and toward American institutions which they hoped to avoid by eliminating reading and discussing were more widespread perhaps than during the days of small groups of vocal protesters, but the resistance was silent, evidence of students' awareness of the predominance of course credits over learning.

What emerged from going back to Forest Hills to look at the administrative context is a pattern of negotiation between the various layers of persons in the school. In the hands of administrators concerned with management objectives and course credits, the formally divided structure unwittingly created teacher resistance by imposing constraints without accompanying supports. The teachers, in reducing student requirements in order to preserve their own efficiencies and authorities, gave students the impression that the content was ritualistic at best and unbelievable at worst. The passive response of students, necessary in their eyes to earn required credits, sent misleading signals to teachers about student abilities and about their own effectiveness as lecturers able to hold an audience silent for long periods of time. In trying to maintain social control goals, the administrators unknowingly created more alienation, albeit rarely disruptive alienation, and resistance. In trying to sustain their concern for the educative goals, the teachers took their content so very seriously that they forgot their students. There existed within the school no mechanism for working through the tension between these conflicting goals. It fell to the individual staff member, the humane and mildly effectual assistant principal with his attempts at student advocacy or the teacher willing to keep informed on subjects while knowing that personal knowledge would only rarely be admitted into classroom discussion -- the individual willing to take on the risks of time and energy to overcome

the cycle of lowered expectations among all concerned. For these teachers, they expressed that that time in their life had passed when they would try single-handedly to develop courses, assign research papers, attempt to involve students of all ability levels. They tried instead to make their lectures interesting, their tests fair (at least two of them did this with some forethought), and their demands on their students simple.

This school in many ways represented a "best case" example. The high tax base, large numbers of able students and interested parents, wealth of social studies resource center materials, lack of major discipline problems, high levels of staff education, all pointed to possibilities for productive student-teacher encounters. If limitations placed upon student access to information were so tight even here, significant questions must be raised regarding the effects of institutional arrangements on patterns of knowledge access and knowledge control in schools. The additional three schools were selected for their specific variations from Forest Hils' structure in order that these questions might be pursued.

CHAPTER 5

FREEBURG HIGH SCHOOL

The word most often used to describe Freeburg High was "mess." Not everyone used the word to mean the same thing, but "mess" invariably popped up in discussions of the school. When teachers at the other observed schools heard that Freeburg High would be a part of the study, they would comment, "I hear they have a real mess out there." Or, "I'd be interested in what you find there -- they've been in a mess for years." Sometimes the referent was the repeated failure of Freeburg's voters to pass school bond authorizations. When social studies teachers in the area said "mess," they referred specifically to Freeburg's lack of a strong social studies credit requirement for graduation, thus low social studies enrollments.

"Mess" meant something else to me as I entered the building for the first time. I stepped through large double doors into a wide hallway strewn with litter, much of it in piles. My first thought was that I must have entered a service entrance. I discovered that I was not near the cafeteria or maintenance area, but the auditorium. This was the school's "front door." I later left by the other main door, which leads out through the cafeteria/commons area. Lunch hour over, the janitor was sweeping litter, mostly paper, into two huge piles, both taller than the large trash receptacles nearby. Though I never found the auditorium entrance quite so messy during my semester of observation, the cafeteria scene was a daily occurrence. Moreover, litter cluttered halls and classrooms and became a dominant "school

problem" topic for several class discussions.

The contrast of the physical setting at Freeburg with the almost too-clean Nelson High I had observed the previous semester was a portent of other striking differences. My first day in the teachers' lounge, a man teacher in his sixties began telling me of the woes and missteps of the new construction. We had not been introduced, so perhaps he mistook me for a substitute teacher. At any rate, he soon filled me in on his complaints about the planning of the new addition to the building.

The litter and spontaneous complaints were visible evidence of a less visible uneasiness that permeated the staff and students. The uneasiness is partly traceable to the overcrowded building and partly to the historical lack of strong community support for the school. Interviews with teachers and the principal revealed that the primary source seemed to be the lack of a common purpose and policy between the administration and faculty. The discord between them had no mechanisms for resolution. It inspired teacher lethargy or resistance and administrative inconsistency and helped engender widespread student disengagement from school practices. As at Forest Hills, exceptions to the general pattern of disengagement arose from teacher initiative, with individual teachers taking the risks of time and effort to attempt improvements, outside and apart from otherwise regular procedures. The analysis of Freeburg, then, will begin with those regularities, the structure of daily routines of order-keeping and teaching, and will then take up a reform effort which countered the pattern of unease and low expectations.

Freeburg was selected as the school which varied from Forest Hills High in that the administration was reputed to be more closely involved

with curriculum than at Forest Hills, though the treatment of information in the classroom was similarly tightly controlled by the teachers. The reputation for administrative involvement was based in part on extensive curriculum reform and re-evaluation measures which involved a person from the state department of public instruction (in social studies, in particular), the school's administration, and a curriculum coordinator from the school district's central office. Although this re-evaluation was taking place, and included a revision of graduation requirements during the observation period, it was the exception to a pattern of administrative distance from classroom matters except as administrative directives on discipline and procedure intruded into teacher time. The reforms, or revisions, in fact were generated by faculty concern and shepherded through heated school board meetings as much by teachers as by the district office staff; the involvement of the building principal was more in the form of quiet support than initiative.

Although the workings of the school did not entirely bear out the reputation which had prompted its inclusion as a representative of the involved administrative/tightly controlled knowledge variation, they did add important insights into internal factors in a traditional high school which can mitigate against effective instruction.

Freeburg Community

Two of the four schools in the sample are of enough note that parents coming into the area frequently move to one of those communities so that their children can attend them. Freeburg is not one of them. It is located in a small town which has an interesting history of its own, but has become in the past fifteen years more and more of a suburban adjunct to a larger town nearby. Freeburg itself has

several light industries but otherwise is characterized by small businesses which serve its residents and surrounding farming areas. Most employment and major shopping are supplied by the larger town. The high school draws its 1400 students from the town of Freeburg, a smaller town which no longer has a high school of its own, farm families in the 75 square miles around the school, and the newly exurban population who have moved to acreages in the country but are otherwise urban in their employment and styles of living.

The school building has been in need of repair and additional space for a number of years, as has the central administration office, housed in a very old elementary school. Enrollments have been increasing with the increased suburbanization of the community, but not at the rates anticipated by school personnel. In the late sixties and early seventies, a number of apartment complexes were built, changing the character of the town and raising expectations of quickly rising school enrollments. Quite often, the apartment renters turned out to be young singles or couples without children, or families who moved into the larger town when their children reached school age. New subdivisions of large, expensive single-family residences and townhouses added projections of rapid expansions of school population, but these did not materialize. The houses were so expensive, according to the principal, that they were more accessible to professionals without children, or with grown children, than to families. School enrollments, then, are still increasing but at a very slow rate, in contrast to declining enrollments in several cities in the area and in contrast to the rapid growth rate originally expected for Freeburg schools. Many of the people who have chosen to buy residences in Freeburg, but work in

the larger town, have done so because property taxes, including school taxes, have been lower there than in the larger community. In addition, only one-third of the households have school-aged children. The combination of adults who chose to live in Freeburg for its lower taxes, the elderly whose incomes and family situations hinder their willingness to support rising school costs, and the presence of many young, childless adults has added to the lack of interest in increased financing for the schools. Bond issues for a new addition to the high school, a new administration building and a swimming pool for the city were repeatedly defeated. Only after repairs and additions to school buildings were separated from the other expenditures were they approved by voters. According to the teachers, tax base differences between the larger town and satellite communities such as Freeburg are narrowing with increased costs of services in these outlying areas. The per pupil expenditures at Freeburg now rival those of neighboring towns past differentials.

The lack of a high priority for money for the schools among people in the community is further exacerbated by the diversity within the population served by the schools. The teachers spoke of a rural-urban (or suburban) split among the students, with the presumption that this extends to their families' interests. Although these differences among students were not visually apparent in observations or student interviews, the teachers said that the students segregate themselves by "town" and "country" categories in the cafeteria and in some school activities. Similar divisions appeared in the school board, again not so blatantly evident or provide simplistic dichotomies, but disunified enough to prevent cohesive long-range planning around a consensus or coalition of purpose.

The High School as an Organization

Like Forest Hills High, Freeburg High was organized in the classic model of American secondary schools, with a building principal and assistant principals, subject matter departments chaired by a faculty member, courses divided by grade level and traditional academic disciplines taught by teachers in single-teacher classrooms. As at Forest Hills, there has been no ability-based tracking or grouping, except that better students elect to take economics, upper-level science and math courses and foreign language in greater numbers than low-achieving students. According to the principal, 60% of the graduates attend two- or four-year colleges, and another 15% attend trade and vocational schools after high school. Of the remaining quarter of the students, it is known but not documented that a good many return to some kind of schooling after working at jobs or in the home for a few years. Most of those who attend college and trade schools remain in the state, and by far the largest numbers attend campuses of the state university system.

Because of the size of the school system, having only one high school, the system is not as top-heavy with adminstrative staff as some larger systems. The superintendent has been with the system for a number of years; within the past five years a curriculum supervisor has been added. Although this person's role helped in the selection of Freeburg as a school with administrative input into curriculum, the secondary teachers see him as primarily interested in and responsible for involvement with elementary school curriculum.

The building principal could be characterized as a weak person in a strong role. That is, the school is organized such that the principal has centralized authority over all subject fields, discipline,

staff review, budget, building, and other traditional principal's duties. By union contract, department chairs cannot review and evaluate their peers, nor can they hire or fire other teachers. The centralization of authority in the school is, according to the teachers interviewed, of less concern than its haphazard and unpredictable application. The principal is preoccupied with order at the expense of program development, resources, planning and oversight of academic goals. There exist no other mechanisms in the school to deal with these. If indeed order-keeping were such a problem that it merited predominance, or if in fact the order-keeping policies were so effective that the teaching staff could devote their time to these other matters, there might be less impatience with the administration's priorities. In fact, the means of dealing with order and other issues tends to be trial-and-error, with frequent shifts in mid-course, leaving students and teachers with little idea what to expect next. Order, to the administration, means controlled behavior. Social control through attention to credentials is of less concern than having people assigned to specified places in the building.

There is no faculty governance arrangement. Because the union largely confines its bargaining to transfer, layoff, and salary issues, there is therefore no effective faculty voice about other matters of working conditions, program evaluation, student needs or resources. The department chair was appointed; the current social studies chair replaced a man who in his own words had too many differences with the administration to be effective. The current chair was popular within the department and greatly respected by the principal, and since no one else wanted the job, he would serve until he asks to be relieved

of it. Departments met monthly or at the discretion of the chair, or at the request of members with pressing concerns. Because the social studies chair was so greatly respected, this department had as effective a voice as any in bringing matters to the principal regarding course changes, teaching assignments and the like. There was less feeling of efficacy in shaping more general policies which effect the overall climate of the school.

During the sixties, the student government voted itself out of existence. No similar organization had arisen to take its place. To elicit students' perspectives, the principal organized a Student Rap Group, comprised of appointed and elected students from each grade who met with him twice each month to discuss such issues as examination schedules, school rules and the like. They succeeded in getting an exam schedule changed during the semester of observation.

Information within the school tended to flow from the top down. The principal was responsible for overseeing the primary academic subject matter departments. He delegated to assistant principals oversight of the four cooperative-vocational areas (such as business and agriculture), athletics, the arts, physical education and extracurricular activities. In reality, these areas such as vocational, extracurricular and athletics required more administrative management involvement because of scheduling buildings and busses, and because of added budget and community relations responsibilities. Both the principal and his assistants were to observe and evaluate probationary teachers during each year of their probation. There were few probationary teachers, none in social studies. The experienced teachers were supposed to be observed and evaluated at regular intervals. There

were no merit salary or other compensations, so the evaluation was rarely substantive.

While the organizational framework of this school fit thousands of American high schools, with its apparently distant administration and somewhat autonomous teachers, these teachers felt that its particular application in their school undermined many of their efforts to teach. Its superficially neutral, rational structure only thinly disguised a vulnerability to inconsistency and ambiguity. There was seldom doubt among the faculty that the policies of the school emanated from the office. The uncertainty came in not knowing when and under what circumstances the policies would be changed. There seemed little expectation that the principal or others in administrative capacities would automatically be concerned with educational quality. By far, the greatest numbers of communications from the office to the teachers concerned discipline and procedure. This concern for order would have been appreciated if in fact it succeeded in alleviating litter, class skipping, or general disengagement from school processes. More often, the new directives on discipline would come in the form of announcements brought in by student messengers interrupting class, or would come as policy shifts in the middle of the semester. The directives were almost always reactive, hasty responses to immediate problems, clumsy attempts to "put out fires."

The School Building

To understand the concern for orderly behavior, one must picture the school building. It was a series of additions to a very old brick structure. The cafeteria/commons, auditorium, a wing of classrooms and lecture halls were relatively new additions. The central portion of the building, housing the cramped teacher's lounge and work area,

was very old and condemned as unsafe. The office and adjoining classrooms were from a vintage newer than the condemned part but much older than the cafeteria/commons. Parts of the building were never well-lighted. Old sections had been allowed to fall into disrepair while succeeding bond issues were hopefully but vainly put before voters. One of the sources for leverage for new construction came from an accreditation report which noted the overcrowding. The state department of public instruction had revised its per pupil space guidelines to 150 square feet per pupil; Freeburg's building had closer to one-third that amount. Even though part of the new state guidelines were space requirements for vocational, handicapped access, and laboratory space and thus misleading if construed as traditional classroom space (they included, for example, space allocations for girls' physical education equitable to that for boys), the overcrowded school building did contribute to several problems. The first of these was simply crowded halls; passing periods between classes were not extended to allow for large numbers of people passing through narrow corridors. Also a problem was teacher space. None of the teachers observed had exclusive use of a classroom. Rather than designate bulletin board space for those teachers using a room, the teachers for the most part tended to ignore the bulletin boards or leave fading announcements or posters up for weeks at a time. Similarly, the bookshelves seemed to be used randomly. Bookshelves for which no one felt fully responsible became filled with litter, pieces of books, unkempt piles of books a teacher brought in for a special lesson but never straightened or took back to storage. Since teachers as a rule did not have their room empty during their planning period, they did not have time in there to arrange displays related to the course, keep things straight

(or see that students did the caretaking), or otherwise make the room attractive. Impersonal space tended to become neglected space; neglected space fostered further feelings of impersonalness, of carelessness, of personal distance from the unattractiveness.

Whether because of crowding or a desire for order, teachers were assigned to patrol the halls and cafeteria during lunch. The lunch hour was staggered, so teachers did not see each other unless they had the same lunch hour and were not on patrol. Those who did not wish to eat in the unruly cafeteria took bag lunches or trays to the faculty lounge, a tiny room with a sink, table, and a few chairs upstairs. Teachers patrolling the halls were to prohibit students from leaving the cafeteria when they finished eating. They could leave only when their lunch hour was over. While this may have kept the halls quiet, it apparently increased the amount of idle time for littering in the cafeteria. (Cynics will see this description as "the way kids are." The cafeteria at Nelson, however, was a pleasant place, free of litter, full of chattering students; a teacher monitor stood by the serving lines, and occasionally a teacher might have to remind a student to throw paper in the trash can, but by and large lunch there was taken as an uncomplicated routine, not a state of siege.)

Academic areas at Freeburg were not free of these preoccupations with order. The library was locked, during lunch hours, with students inside. Those students wishing to use the library during one of the lunch hours had to enter as the bell was ringing or be locked out; those inside were to stay inside until the end of the period.

The crowding must have caused some dislocations and needs for extra caution on discipline, but it does not fully explain the lack of

caring about the environment which administrative personnel displayed. Two incidents involving windows reveal there was more to the problem. In Mr. Lennon's classroom, a long crack slanted across a large window. A sturdy wind or accidental push on the window would have sent shards of glass on the nearest row of desks. Mr. Lennon tried over a two-year period to have the window replaced or at least taped. One would think that for insurance liability reasons, if not concern for the students, the maintenance staff would have been instructed to replace the window at once. This did not happen; the rationale, when given, was that the window would be replaced when the new construction began. Windows in parts of the building not being razed would be replaced or caulked for insulation. The window remained a hazard during my entire time in the building.

When the insulating caulking did occur, it brought its own problems. Following the semester of observation, the Freeburg city paper carried a story about a social studies teacher's problem with toxic fumes in his classroom. It seems that Mr. Edwards, a teacher I did not observe but who was considered excellent by the principal and the department and who had won a citizen-sponsored teaching award, taught in a room across from Mr. Lennon's during the time the windows were being sealed with new insulating material. The fumes became so strong he had to open a window for ventilation over a weekend. When he returned to school, the window had been closed. Later the superintendent visited the room to check on his complaint but did nothing. The room was being used seven of the eight class periods during the day. Two weeks later, Mr. Edwards got a note saying that the assistant principal discovered the cause of the fumes; a second builder had looked at the work and said that the compound had been applied too thickly and so would con-

tinue to give off toxic fumes. A reporter who found Mr. Edwards' letter to the press called the principal and was told all students had been removed from the room the minute a danger was known; in fact, no students or teachers had ever been moved. Mr. Edwards' letter had said that students' well-being and safety should be the first priority. Like the broken window, which remained broken during two school years, the improperly sealed window was eventually fixed, but only after being a hazard to the students, a disruptive concern to the teacher, and an example of administrative indifference. Administrative concern for orderliness was weighted toward directing and controlling students rather than toward providing an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. This was lost on neither teachers nor students.

Staff Relations

Relations between the administration and faculty shifted between laissez-faire-distant and adversarial. All the teachers spoke pleasantly about Mr. Morton, the principal, as a person, called him "nice" and "gentlemanly," but several stated that he never should have been a principal. They expressed a perception of clear boundaries in the school between teaching responsibilities and administration functions. Except for periodic meetings on budgets and teaching assignments, it was clear that the work of the department proceeded quite apart from the principal. Several past links between the two levels had been eroded by changing circumstances. In the past, Mr. Lennon said that the department had been able to help interview prospective new teachers and submit a ranked list of preferences. When the department disagreed over a hiring (it was his theory that a better woman candidate had lost to a man who would do some coaching), teachers were no longer invited to

interview candidates. The chair described his role as including having a chance to rank resumes of teaching applicants, as well as sitting in on hiring interviews. Since no new teachers had been hired in several years, except for a temporary replacement during a maternity leave, this staff privilege became moot. In addition, the lack of staff turnover itself meant that these opportunities to jointly review program needs had ceased.

At Forest Hills, the faculty had been physically distant from the principal as well as distant in task. The building was quite large, the grade level principals handled many discipline actions, and the counseling staff took care of student placement in course assignments, attendance and other student-related matters. The principal at Freeburg was physically nearer, with his office near the social studies rooms, and more intrusive in policy. Except for faculty meetings, the teachers at Forest Hills heard from the principal directly only through rare memoranda. Routine was so established that new policy statements during the semester were rare. Since materials and resources were handled at the department level, mainly through the social studies resource centers and the department chair, there was little need to solicit the principal's participation.

In contrast, Freeburg seemed never to hit a stride, to establish a routine. Students wondered what rules were in force at what time, and as will be discussed in the case of Mr. Lennon's class, they saw no coherence to policies about behavior. Graduation requirements were also in flux. Teachers built their courses around exam schedules that were often changed without notice. They scheduled their free time not knowing when it would be shifted to accommodate new hall duties. At one

point the new assignments provoked a union grievance procedure because they were, in the minds of teachers, unbargained changes in the current contract. And the administration seemed always to be nervously watching what students would do. Just as the Forest Hills teachers kept the memories of anti-war dissent alive in their decisions to limit student reading, administrators at Freeburg were on edge because of one incident in the past when students managed to put a Volkswagen on top of the school, and because of an exam period disrupted by noise in the halls. In addition, senior skip day, a day in the spring when all seniors stayed out of school and many had a party at a state park or other site out of town, raised fears discussed by the staff all spring, in almost exact proportion to the anticipation the seniors felt in the weeks before their big day.

Each group seemed to feel very insecure in the face of the anticipated actions of the other. Neither group, neither students, faculty, nor administration, fully trusted that the other would do its job in ways beneficial to the rest of the school. When I asked the principal about the littering, he answered, "That's the way society is. I wish the kids were atypical, but they're not. We'll have a faculty meeting where we discuss student littering in the lunch room, and after the meeting of 100 teachers, it'll look like a dump -- as bad as the kids. That's the way our throw-away society is."

He had similarly low expectations of teachers' willingness to teach: "Teachers do not exercise their professional judgment on what kids need to do to learn the subject. They may feel that 25 problems are needed to teach a math concept, but the students will only do 15, or will gripe, so the teacher assigns only 15. When they gripe that's too much, they [students] get the teachers to lower it even further."

Thus, he was not unaware of the defensive strategies teachers were using to elicit student participation, or to avoid student resistance, but saw no authority on his part to challenge the pattern. He viewed his role as passive, trusting that because the students' families were interested in education, "they'll make it," or that individual teachers would salvage the students' education: "Yet teachers who are demanding are the ones students give high ratings, mention as the good teacher. They gravitate to the demanding teacher." His passive, some might say cynical, view of the faculty, and use of them as patrols and monitors but disregard for their needs for books and safe classrooms, did nothing to affirm teachers' professionalism and in fact contributed to the overall sense that things were out of control.

Mr. Morton had been a teacher in another city during the time its teachers unionized. He had been active in building the union and remembered its early days with fondness. He said that the teachers organized in order to get class sizes reduced, course preparation loads equalized, and teacher voices heard in more schoolwide decisions. His memory was that the organizing was based on securing better conditions for the children. To increase his income, he left education for a few years to work in industry, but he found the anti-intellectual atmosphere stifling. At his place of work, even mentioning having watched a PBS special instead of the popular situation comedies on commercial television made one an outcast. He returned to education but went into administration, presumably to have a salary closer to his industry pay.

He said that as an administrator, he "still cared about the same things (issues he had worked for in the union), but suddenly the teachers said, 'no, now you're the enemy. You're on the other side.'" He said it was very hard to be an administrator in the community where

one has taught, because the "teachers can't accept the fact that you are the same person." He felt the adversarial relations between his office and the teaching staff deeply. He would probably be surprised to know that the teachers attributed that conflict to his use of the principal's role rather than to the general split between administrators and union members. Mr. Morton was a kind man who seemed to have no imagination for making things work at the school. He willingly talked and listened to the Rap Group and in fact teachers said that one-on-one he was quite personable, but he seemed very detached from the student body, the classrooms and the faculty. In the absence of a more collegial mechanism, he became even more authoritative, thus even more adversarial in the eyes of teachers, handing down directives without staff discussion of their impact or of other alternatives.

Mr. Morton did have praise for individual teachers, especially Mr. Edwards and Mr. Reznick, but overall he felt no confidence that what the teachers were about was good. The teachers, in turn, saw the seemingly arbitrary shifts in rules and policies as a lack of confidence in their personal professionalism and as irritants which made students rebel against petty rules or take liberties when rules were inconsistently enforced. The very attempts to create (or restore) order were often so disproportionate to the immediate or anticipated offense that they seemed desperate. For example, disorder in the halls during the previous semester exams had prompted new rules which forbad any student's being in the building during exams except those hours he or she had a scheduled exam, and the eight exam periods were crowded into two days, giving some students three or four major exams on one day. Rather than using free hours during this time to prepare for the next semester's work, put past files in order or finish grading exams,

teachers were to patrol the halls. Through the Student Rap Group's working with the principal, teachers and students managed to have exams extended to the original three days, but many of the patrolling rules stayed in place. Such rules ignored purposes not related strictly to order, such as students needing extra help in a subject before an exam, students using labs, library or other resources and teachers needing to use their time in ways they considered more productive and basic to their teaching. Such rules made the teachers and students feel a lack of respect for them as persons and for their purposes. As Mary Metz observed in Classrooms and Corridors, students know when they are being taken seriously, and they will respond accordingly. The rules regarding exam periods did not foster more responsible behavior because they presumed students' inability to assume responsibility.

Metz's analysis also points to the close relationship between behavior in the corridors, or non-classroom areas of schools, and the way students will behave and respond within the classroom. Though the observed teachers did not treat their students as adversaries, there existed in the classroom the same mutually low expectations between the teacher and student groups as found outside the classroom between administrative and faculty personnel and between the administration and the students.

Teaching Social Studies at Freeburg

The teachers of social studies at Freeburg were more diverse personally and politically than those at Forest Hills. And they had far fewer "walls" between their personal knowledge and the knowledge they made accessible in the classroom. They resembled their Forest Hills counterparts in two important ways: their reaction to their administrative settings tended to make them teach "defensively," maintaining

tight control over classroom knowledge, with more student discussion than at Forest Hills but similar reductions in substance and student assignments. And they assumed personal costs in time, energy and effort when they attempted to raise standards above that expected by the regularities of the institution. Interestingly, the similarities of the defensive teaching strategies among teachers at the two schools obscured their differences in politics and philosophy. They also reinforced the low expectations students felt within the school as a whole, and therefore contributed to the disengagement that the teachers, in taking on costs of reforms, were trying to overcome.

Before each classroom and teacher can be considered, the department as a whole needs to be understood for the history of its program. During the sixties, Freeburg had responded to an educational trend by shifting to a modular schedule. The shift entailed changing both the school timetable, by varying lengths of class periods, and the course schedule. Departments reorganized into a series of electives, or modules, which students could take in varying sequence. When this did not prove to be satisfactory to students and teachers, it was later abandoned. In the return to the more traditional timetable and schedule of course offerings, the social studies department retained the requirement that one course would be required for graduation, with all other social studies courses being elected. The one requirement for several years was a general introduction to the social sciences, based on theories and terminology of psychology, sociology, economics, anthropology, geography and historiography. At the time of this study, the single requirement was a World Studies course, a survey of selected countries on each continent, primarily focusing on their cultures, with capsule

histories and some map work. Other courses offered included a two-semester U.S. history sequence, a current problems course, a semester of contemporary U.S. history, a women's history course, western civilization, economics, and consumer economics. Several area studies courses (Asia, Africa, for example) were listed in the departmental syllabus, but seldom offered.

The assumption underlying the single requirement plus electives is that students will elect those areas that interest them. The reality was that most students took as little social studies as possible. Very few students enrolled in four years of social studies classes. Of the 1400 students, only 900 were enrolled in social studies at any one time, fewer if one remembers that the 900 includes several students taking more than one course. One explanation is that offered by Mr. Lennon. During the sixties and early seventies, young people were flocking to history and social sciences to try to understand race relations, the war in Viet Nam, student rights and other political issues. By 1980, students were turning to bread-and-butter courses, courses such as math and science among the college-bound, and agricultural and business co-ops among those heading for jobs and trade schools. In addition, one half of the juniors and seniors at Freeburg (and at the other high schools observed) held part-time jobs during the school year.[1] Many upper level students stayed in school only as many hours as needed to fill graduation requirements, then left for jobs, many working over 30 hours per week. Unlike the popular science and energy course at Nelson High or the popular literature courses at Forest Hills, there seemed to be no social studies course which by virtue of its subject or teacher drew large numbers of students. The chair told me that the

area studies courses, for example, were among several courses listed but rarely taught, for lack of interest. The lack of interest among students and "state of siege" perpetuated by the administration placed teachers in a precarious middle ground. Their teaching styles combined their resistance and accommodation to administrative priorities, their attempts to overcome student inertia, and their personal views of their subject.

The Department

Mr. Reznick chaired the department of eight men and one woman. His "office" was a desk in a former classroom which also contained the desks of the other social studies teachers and some teachers from home economics, English and foreign langauge. The room was so unconducive to productive work that Mr. Lennon, in a pique (or so he tells it), had his desk moved to his classroom. Since another teacher used that room during Mr. Lennon's planning period, he could rarely use his desk productively there, either.

The social studies materials for the library were housed in a social studies resource center, a large room lined with bookshelves and filled with tables and chairs. The room was used as a study hall, with a social studies teacher on "duty", and also as a place for taking make-up tests. Occasionally a teacher would take a class there to use materials, but this was not frequent except in the case of Mr. Jackson, who was teaching the unit on research papers. Many bookshelves were empty, though the materials that were in the room were quite good, ranging from easy-to-read school texts to political analysis, historical works, and some atlases. When asked who stocked the materials, and why they seemed to reflect 1960's purchase, Mr. Lennon explained that "that's what new teachers used to do, in fact I guess I did a lot of ordering and looking for things when I first came."

One young woman in particular had devoted a great deal of time to selecting and ordering materials for the resource center. She was described as too energetic and political for the previous administration and while she was not dismissed, she finally became frustrated enough to leave and find work where her activist model of teaching would be more appreciated. The department or a teacher could request an acquisition, and the librarian would consider it depending on available budget, but there was no systematic collective procedure for reviewing existing holdings or selecting new ones.

For classroom materials the department worked out a five-year budget plan in conjunction with the principal. According to Mr. Reznick, their department's budget had held steady for above five years, although costs and enrollments had increased. A portion of some title funds had been used for the one-time purchase of wall maps and other major classroom aids.

Like teachers at most other Wisconsin high schools, these teachers had enviable autonomy in the selection of texts. Unlike the teachers at the other observed schools, the Freeburg staff never seemed to have enough copies of texts for their classes. Mr. Lennon observed that although Freeburg's per pupil expenditures were becoming equal to those in surrounding communities, and even exceeded those of some school systems with better reputations, there never seemed to be enough of anything. To him, the most serious shortage was books. His economics students had a few copies of a new edition of the book and more copies of an older edition. Early in the year he had ordered sufficient copies for all the class to have the newer edition. His attempts to secure the additional copies became a running joke during the semester.

My notes of his lectures include numerous comments regarding having to make assignments from two texts, trying to reconcile test material between the two texts, and expressing hope that the books "should be in by Friday." At one point. he explained to the class that although the faculty had a great deal of say in the selection of texts, the selection and administrative approval was just the beginning. Every order for every copy had to be approved by the building principal, then sent to the central office, then back to the building principal. Especially galling to Mr. Lennon was the rule that only office staff could telephone publishers. The office staff frequently did not know all the pertinent information, especially distinctions among varying editions of the same book, and did not share the teacher's urgency over the delays in shipment.

Mr. Lennon finally announced one day that the economics books had come in, that students would no longer need to share to read material only found in the newer edition. He decided to play a joke on the class by opening the box during class and pretending the wrong books had been sent. The large box was brought in and placed on his desk. He opened the books and did a dramatic doubletake. And then a second doubletake. It seems that the publisher really did send the wrong books. Five hardback copies of Elements of Econometrics, a college-level economics text arrived; fifteen copies of a paperback, Elements of Economics, had been ordered. The semester was drawing to a close and the class remained without sufficient books.

Those books that were in the school were often frayed, in pieces, or in short supply. Unlike the Forest Hills teachers, the staff at Freeburg did occasionally assign text material as homework; more often,

it was read during class time. These teachers also spent more time than those at Forest Hills gathering material to add to their teaching files. They used handouts, worksheets, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, public service pamphlets from governmental and industry sources, and reprints of sections from books. They saw themselves as creators, compilers and generators of information, not as mere lecturers or guides to textbooks. But they were not furnished with convenient places to store these materials, budgets for purchasing interesting books and journals, or even adequate numbers of basic texts. Their own personal interest in their subjects tended to overcome the institutional drag on their enthusiasms for collecting things. Where it did not, no procedure (program evaluation, staff evaluation or whatever) stood to monitor the students' interests in or needs for the availability of resources.

Just as the administration left the faculty to its own devices on academic matters, the department functioned as a loose coalition of individuals. Instructional technique was left up to individual teaching style and to the dictates of the particular course content. The new project to require a research paper did have the discussion and backing of the department, and gave a rare opportunity for coordination with certain English teachers. The social studies teachers were a congenial group of men, pursuing very different aims, from politics or coaching, to building toward administrative leadership, to in-school concerns. Except for their agreement on increasing the social studies graduation requirements, they rarely dealt with their courses as part of an overall departmental policy.

The Classrooms

In order to make the investigation of curriculum content parallel among the four schools, the procedure used at Forest Hills in the

previous study furnished the core of the research: classroom observation of the economics content of the highest level required social studies course. At the other three schools, the highest level required course was also the course most pertinent to the study of American institutions, United States History, usually a two-or three-semester sequence. Because the only required course at Freeburg was the World Studies course, a different approach was needed in order to document the distribution of economics information through social studies courses. More courses, and thus more teachers, would have to be observed. World Studies was observed for half a semester because of its status as a graduation requirement. This course was offered to ninth graders and did not focus on American institutions, so it was observed as necessary but not sufficient to the central research questions. In addition, observations were conducted in United States History (for most of a semester), economics (for a semester), women's studies, (for the last few weeks of school), consumer economics (a nine-weeks unit), and current problems (most of a semester). Except for Western Civilization, these comprise the courses most frequently taken; they include those directly related to the purpose of the research. Except for women's studies, each course was observed long enough to watch the teacher's relations with the students and with the topic developing over time. Each course was taught mainly by the person observed and reflected that person's views of students, course material, resources, and learning.

Mr. Reznick

Mr. Reznick was the chair of the department, a man in his late thirties who was extremely hard-working and conscientious. When asked whether he wished he could reward good teachers or sanction weaker ones, Mr. Morton had replied that there was no need to reward teachers: "If

given no budget, Eric Reznick could still teach. If all our teachers were like Eric. . . ."

I observed Mr. Reznick's class on consumer economics. It was a nine-week unit in a team-taught rotating series on law, government and practical economics. He assigned a text, which was very simple, but taught mostly from materials he had gathered. The students received handouts from governmental, industry and public service groups on insurance, credit, landlord-tenant relations, and other personal economic issues. The course dealt with economic theory on only very simple levels and only where directly related to everyday issues such as price and the availability of credit. Speakers from utility companies, consumer groups, and businesses were brought in several times during the nine weeks to address the students in the whole sequence. Mr. Reznick had a strong interest in his subject and a solid grasp of the issues involved and available resources.

Like the other teachers at Freeburg, he had to expect that the richness of the course would be lost on all but a few students. He tolerated less side chatter than most of the teachers but still did not get all students to participate by listening to the speaker, paying attention to the films, or discussing. As will be discussed in the ninth section of this report, all the Freeburg teachers engaged in what I have termed "defensive" teaching in order to elicit minimal student compliance. For Mr. Resnick, this came less in watering down presentations, for presumably practical economics is already a step down academically from the regular economics course and draws students accordingly. His lectures remained organized and substantive, but the assignments were geared to anticipate low effort on the part of students.

As an independent study project, the students were to collect news items on an economic topic and comment on them in a prescribed manner, or tackle other more ambitious projects such as attending public hearings at regulatory boards, attending a city council meeting, or meeting with people in the community who deal with issues being studied. Or graphics presentations could be made illustrating topics studied. The levels of difficulty were varied; the common response was to take the least demanding, the news items, and even then a number of students had to be repeatedly reminded that failure to comply would be failure in the course. In the face of such apathy, Mr. Reznick continued to be cheerful and hard-working, interested in adding to his course, and in improving the department's offerings and teaching strategies. In fact, he was interested in this research project precisely because he felt the department needed outside leverage to bolster their claims for more resources and more social studies graduation credits. He and Mr. Jackson led the move for those increased credits, even though it meant friction with other departments and at first lonely efforts on their parts.

Mr. Jackson

Mr. Jackson exhibited the least frustration with administrative and student apathy. He had his own agenda for teaching and for program development, and they stemmed from his own career plans as well as his concern for the students. He was working on a graduate degree during the observations, helping several periods a day with the drop-out prevention program, serving as an unofficial observer/member of the graduation credits reform committee, and teaching the required World Studies course. He was the only one able to create an orderly

workplace out of the chaos of the crowded teacher office room, and the only one to receive close to full compliance on a student assignment.

The World Studies course was a survey of other countries and cultures. It combined brief historical sketches with current geography and culture. Textbook based, the course under Mr. Jackson was a straight-forward march around the planet. The students were assigned pages in the text, were sometimes tested on them without warning, and were required to turn in answers to questions on worksheets or from the text. The content of the course was largely a series of lists, of place names, political leaders, products and terms from the dominant religions. Mr. Jackson's knowledge of some of these countries was thin, scarcely more than the textbook summaries. But he conveyed a sense that the material was there to be mastered and an expectation that students would master it.

Although his familiarity with his subject was not nearly so comprehensive as hers, Mr. Jackson's style of conveying information most closely resembled Miss Langer's at Forest Hills. Like her, he responded to institutional disorder by creating his own efficiencies. He responded to student disinterest by keeping a tight rein on content, thus assuring his position as the authority on it. He differed from Miss Langer in allowing, even requiring more student talk, especially in answering leading questions about the previous night's reading assignment. He also was the only teacher at Freeburg for whom the students frequently took notes. (Other teachers lectured as though students were taking notes, but few actually did; often I would be the only person writing.)

A look at one of his lectures gives a fairly accurate picture of Mr. Jackson's treatment of the content. He began each class period

with a question about the news, took a few comments, then proceeded to pull down a map and lecture. On a February day, Mr. Jackson pulled down a map of Europe and began to quiz the students on their reading:

Mr. J: We usually leave books open. Today I want them closed. I want to see if you really did read it. Take notes if you want. I haven't made a decision yet regarding a quiz. Today we are going to talk about a section in the text -- it gave you just a little tidbit -- of many civilizations in the Middle East. Now, an ancient civilization formed where there was enough water -- Katy?

Katy: No.

George: No.

Dick: No.

David: Mesopotamia.

Mr. J: Okay, the Mesopotamian civilization. We find this on the shores of a couple of rivers. . . .

Eva: Tigris and Euphrates.

Mr. J: Why near water, Mike?

Mike: Irrigation.

Mr. J: Anything else?

David: Transportation.

Mike: Water.

Bart: Good soil for crops.

Mr. J: We find many civilizations beginning on rivers. What country?

Molly: Israel?

Pete: Iraq.

Mr. J: Any other civilizations founded on a river?

Anne: Egypt, on the Nile. Was the soil as rich as Mesopotamian soil?

Mr. J: Mesopotamia had richer soil. That's a shot in the dark. (He means that he is guessing.)

Anne: Doesn't the Nile have jungles?

Mr. J: You're thinking of the Amazon. (chuckles) Wrong continent. The Tigris and Euphrates had access to the Persian Gulf. I wish I could give you a good time period for these, but I can't. Egyptian, I suppose, 8,000 B.C. A ballpark figure. Mesopotamia, earlier, maybe 12,000 to 10,000 B.C. I could be several thousand years off.

The class then proceeded to take up the Hebrew flight from Egypt, with such student questions as how the Red Sea parted, whether it was a matter of tides and whether the redness was created by tiny marine organisms. Than Mr. J. asked where the Hebrew people "ended up."

David: I don't know.

Mr. J: They were heading for Canaan but ended up in Lebanon and Israel. An empire is established -- Israelite/Hebrew/Jewish. Two important kings we should remmeber, who united all the Hebrews under one king, Solomon and David. The Hebrew empire was 973 B.C. to when it crumbled in 586 B.C., conquered by guess who?

The discussion continued and touched on the meaning of <u>diaspora</u>, the Babylonians, the Persians, Alexander the Great, the dates of the Greek empire, and the geographic extent of the Roman empire. The class ended on the discussion of Romans as polytheists.

The worksheet for the day had contained such questions as What were

the two great river valley civilizations? Who are the "chosen people," and what is the "promised land"? Who destroyed the Persian Empire? And define such terms as Kaaba, Koran, Allah, Hegira, Caliph and so on. Fourteen other terms such as Saladin, Tamerlane, Mustafa Kemal, and Balfour Declaration could be defined for extra credit.

The students were accustomed to the whirlwind pace of the lectures. The material was extremely fragmented, almost always presented as lists, occasionally organized in outline form, making the disparate pieces difficult to piece together. The manner of testing, answering short answers or filling in blanks, made piecing the fragments together unnecessary for success in the course. As in Miss Langer's class at Forest Hills, the lists gave the students certainties about what they would be tested on, and gave the teacher an efficient way of conveying a great deal of material in a brief timespan. For many of these ninth graders, it was their first course that included notetaking; many of them found the content interesting because of news events in other countries (such as the American hostages held in Iran) or people they had met from abroad.

As the only required course, this one included a research paper. In combination with the English department, the social studies department had the year before developed standards for instruction on researching and writing a formal paper. This was the only extended writing assignment observed in this school and the most formally instructive at any of the schools. As might be expected for a first paper, the instruction was weighted more toward proper footnote form than toward substance, say comparing ideas, evaluating the bias of a source, investigating the value of a source, presenting facts or

developing a coherent theme. The resulting papers were more precise than interesting, but were graded for both form and content, an exacting task for which Mr. Jackson's natural attention to detail well-suited him. Topics of the papers ranged from "The Economy of Switzerland," and "Germany After World War II," to "The Cold War and Containment in Europe," and "The St. Lawrence Seaway." The required length was a minimum of three typewritten pages or five to seven handwritten ones, almost more appropriate to an elementary school assignment than high school. Most exceeded the minimum limits by a few pages, though none were as extensive as the titles indicated. The papers, like the course, were broad surveys. The paper was essential for satisfying the required credit, and compliance was far higher than on any other assignment observed for this study.

Mr. Jackson seemed to see the vacuum in administrative leadership as a challenge for his own energies and ideas. He was not always complimentary of administrative policies, but as a rules-oriented person, and one preparing himself for an administrative career, he exhibited less conflict with administrative rule shifts than the other teachers. Since he taught the one required course, he had sufficient texts. He also worked with the assistant principals on the drop-out prevention program, so felt less distance from the administration than teachers not having these constructive contacts. He was in a position, in observing the meetings on graduation requirements and in working with the drop-out prevention program, to see some positive developments. His course would seem to have raised some expectations that social studies requires some reading and writing, that it involves student participation, that it covers specified content. If that is the expectation, it was not evident among students in the upper-level courses.

Mr. Harris

Compared to the order and routine of outlines and worksheets of Mr. Jackson's course, Mr. Harris' current problems course was a loose rap session. The semester course was observed for several weeks because its focus on contemporary issues would presumably touch on economic issues. It rarely did because it was based on such psychological and social psychological themes as personality, death and dying, and the family. The portion on personality included topics on socialization, intelligence, heredity, and psychological theories of personality. The death and dying unit considered stages of death and grief, funeral practices, abortion, euthanasia, and violence.

The procedure in the class was for Mr. Harris to introduce the topic with brief comments or a handout. Almost all reading took place in class, often with materials that were collected at the end of the class rather than taken home to be studied. Readings ranged from issues-oriented paperback texts on the topics to xeroxed copies of magazine articles. For example, the lesson on intelligence included a Mensa intelligence test copied from Reader's Digest. A one-page mimeo on Freud was copied from a psychology book. A three-page summary of Erik Erikson's Eight Stages of Man had been typed specially for the course, and cited as taken from a book of psychology readings.

After the topic was introduced, the students would complete the readings, usually in 15-30 minutes during class. A discussion or film would follow. Among the strongest components of the class were films on such subjects as funeral practices in different cultures and medical ethics regarding saving severely handicapped infants. Less successful use was made of videotaped programs from television; the videotape room was a small, dark closet-like room behind the stage, awkward to reach

and almost airless. The quality of videotaping was poorer than at Nelson and Maizeville, where teachers made greater use of the process and had better support staffs for the equipment usage.

Mr. Harris' discussions were very casual. Few students took notes. Three or four students interested in the topic carried the conversation (and this group varied according to topic, though one or two spoke up whatever the topic) along with the teacher. Mr. Harris liked to divide the class into groups to discuss the topics, perhaps to make lists of ideas or respond to lists of questions he provided. Here again, there was no expectation that everyone would contribute. A few students dominated the group discussions, more often those interested in the topic than those prepared by reading. Mr. Harris had no high expectation that students would spend a great deal of time on the course; he at one time had put some effort into gathering the materials used, but taught in a very laid-back manner quite different from Mr. Jackson's worksheets and quizzes and Mr. Reznick's constant searching for interesting and effective materials. Current Problems was a popular course, frequently elected by middle-level and weaker students. More ambitious students usually signed up for economics or western civilization, more political students perhaps for women's history. Current Problems dealt with personal issues students cared about and enjoyed hearing people discuss. There were interesting moments, and these came often enough for students' attention to be held. In its tone and off-hand manner, the course fit the general ethos of the school, differing only in that most students felt comfortable in the class; Mr. Harris' pleasant manner moderated the tensions felt in other parts of the building. His lack of serious demands on the students invited their cooperation; he did receive their cooperation (few were as rude as students in other classes) but rarely

excited commitment or intense participation. His accommodation to the minimal expectations of the administration was to ask for minimal participation from his students and within that framework he would provide some interesting films and readings. Many students sat silent the entire semester, while the vocal few carried the discussions. Mr. Harris had structured the content in such a way that equilibrium was reached between casual effort, on his part and on the students' part, and topical interest. Given the climate of the school, he may have succeeded in carrying along more of the students toward learning than those teachers who tried to demand more but could not engage students in the learning process. His simplifications in this elective course demonstrated one way teachers responded in a school of low expectations.

Mr. Lennon

When Mr. Jackson polled his class on their views of war, all but four students and Mr. Jackson himself called themselves "doves" rather than "hawks." Mr. Lennon was a perfect foil to Mr. Jackson's announced political conservatism and his strictly ordered lectures and worksheets. Mr. Lennon described himself variously as a Marxist, an anarchist, and a social-democrat. Most accurately, he should probably be called a progressive or a liberal democrat. For many of his views, he would have been censured in the McCarthy era that swept the state, and indeed the nation, in the fifties. Now, because of his teaching style, students scarcely recognized the political content of many of his lectures. To them, he was just doing "social studies" like the rest of their teachers. Mr. Lennon was interesting for this study, then, not just because he taught the course formally called "economics," but because he gave evidence of the way minimal teaching can reduce even controversial content to indistinguishable ritual.

Mr. Lennon and Mr. Reznick were among the most knowledgeable of the teachers observed for the study. Of all the teachers, Mr. Lennon had the least distance, or "wall," between his personal knowledge and the information he conveyed in the classroom. Even so, he was a very frustrated teacher, frustrated not only by broken windows that no one cared to repair, but by the similar administrative indifference to matters he considered important within the school and by society's unwillingness to pay teachers. He was also frustrated with the point he had reached in his career, a point he saw as far from his original motivations for becoming a teacher.

Mr. Lennon reminisced that he had become a teacher because "all respectable radicals in the 1960s went into teaching to save the world." At a point when many of his fellow students decided to stay in graduate school, to remain near the scene of campus activism, he felt it was time to leave and to begin to address issues outside the university setting. He had hoped to teach in a much larger city, where friends of his were involved in community organizing, especially in black neighborhoods. He was led to believe he would be hired by the schools there, but was not. He applied with smaller school systems and happened to be in the placement office when an administrator from Freeburg came in to fill a teaching position in the then new modular schedule. Having been turned down in the middle of another interview, being told by the interviewer, "I don't think we want you," he found the educational philosophy and student participation goals of the modular plan compatible with his interests in academic freedom and education for social change.

At the beginning of his teaching career, he had remained active in political issues, eventually turning his attention away from campus and urban issues toward teacher's union work. He had since seen issues

such as academic freedom dissolve into self-censorship by teachers and fights for better working conditions yield to issues of salary and seniority protection. He speculated that much of the shift came through the hiring of certain types of teachers. He spoke of the woman teacher who had helped stock the resource center but later left, with the apparent blessing of the administration who preferred less activist, reformist teachers. He also described a man who was not hired, probably because of his energies and ideas. In response to my question of whether self-censorship was more a matter of who was hired or who was afraid, he replied:

> I think it's both. The guy who is going to give the speech at graduation, Sam Reynolds, I think is the perfect example of the kind of guy who doesn't get a job in teaching. He filled in here when a teacher had an extended illness. Mr. Reynolds was a dynamic teacher. I was kind of hopin' they didn't hire him just because he made me look bad -- uh -- I don't know if he would have been able to maintain that level (of energy). I think maybe I had that energy at one point, I don't know -- but he just involved kids.

The man was at the time of the interview involved in a dispute to help keep open neighborhood schools the district he lived in wanted to close. "Anyway, they didn't hire him -- even though he was recommended by several members of the department."

Mr. Lennon had seen potentially committed, energetic teachers let go or never hired. And he had seen a shift from great student interest in political issues to math and science, mostly because of job possibilities. But also he said that he saw students as "buying technology."

Just as society was awakening to the dangers and inadequacies of many of our technologies, his students were expressing confidence that technology could solve all social problems. Several students could not understand why the economy was in such turmoil; one had asked, "We have all these models. Why don't we just create an economy? The computers are there."

He noticed what I had noticed in extensive interviews with Forest Hills High students, "when the students say they, there seems not to be nearly as much interest in who makes decisions, as there was, even among high school kids 5, 6, 10 years ago." He tried to relate their passive view of democracy to the running of the school, to demonstrate how conflict and power and control can operate. At the end of the first semester, after noise during exams had caused such disruptions, he tried to talk with his own classes about their power relative to the administration's. "I said then, by the end of the year, there's gonna be people down there watching you (in the commons area), detention, all this stuff. They told me I was crazy. They said, 'Who could DO that?' Then one kids says, 'If it's gonna happen, it's gonna happen.' The idea that perhaps if the students took some initiative and did some things, you know, some of them exercised some power, people on the Student Rap Group, say, just didn't occur to them. I tried to tell them, hey, you have those privileges, you have some rights because some students before you fought for them. They went to a lot of trouble so you would have these things." As he observed, the controls on halls and commons areas were imposed even earlier than he had predicted, and the students rebelled only by becoming sloppier or less interested, not by trying to change the policies.

The contradictions between Mr. Lennon's goals for his teaching and his frustration with administrative and student disinterest were manifest in his teaching. The reformist intentions emerged through the content of the lectures and readings. The disillusionment was visible in the style of his teaching and the lack of demands he made on the students. Unfortunately, the effect of the latter was often to trivialize the former.

Mr. Lennon's economics and history lessons were rich and substantive when he taught. His lectures were full of controversy, theory, technical terminology, personal experiences, contrasting ideas and abundant facts. In economics he would frequently assign contradictory readings, choosing very conservative and radical economists to represent their points of view. He dared to explain such difficult concepts as elasticity, marginal propensities to consume or save, functions of money, market equilibrium and social goods. Unlike the teachers at Forest Hills, he did not present a picture of a simplistic economy that works perfectly, worthy of unquestioning trust. He presented a very complicated picture of an uncertain national and international economic scene and honestly admitted that experts and citizens disagree among themselves and with each other about what makes the economy work, what causes problems, and how those problems should be solved. His view of students and of learning would not have permitted sanitized lectures of perfect, abstract models, say of supply and demand or credit or price. He drew on examples from the news and from students' own experiences, with the goal not of hiding his personal knowledge of the subject but of sharing it and, even more, of drawing them into concern as well.

If the simplistic, too-perfect descriptions of the world presented by the teachers at Forest Hills made the students skeptical of school-supplied information, Mr. Lennon's honesty and his willingness to share personal knowledge should have engaged students in the teaching-learning dialogue, perhaps even to the point of their sharing their personal knowledge as well and incorporating portions of the lecture information into their personal store. Mr. Lennon's teaching style embodied enough defensive simplifications that the lively student-teacher dialogue rarely emerged.

He did not simplify topics, but he did simplify assignments. He did not hide controversy, but he rarely asked students to take part in weighing the disparate sides rather than just reading about them. The textbook, what few copies existed, took a rather straight-forward consensus approach to the content. This was the basis for most tests. While lectures figured into Mr. Lennon's view of testable material, he never could convince students to take notes.

He rarely tried to convince students of anything. Class always began quite slowly, with a slow roll call and a chat about the news of the day. Here Mr. Lennon was at his best; the students knew he was active in politics, often helping with campaigns and once even having run for office, and they respected his first-hand information on the subject. Those who were interested in following the news paid rapt attention to this portion of class and drew him out with questions, many of them informed inquiries. The tone shifted when "real class" started. Mr. Lennon did not lose his expertise, and often continued to lace the lectures with anecdotes or close-to-home examples. Price theory, for example, might be discussed in terms of the Spanish Club's pizza sales in the commons. But Mr. Lennon did not exercise authority

over the classroom commensurate with his authority over the material.

Side chatter accompanied almost every lecture. Many times I would note that I was the only person taking notes. Notes on this class are filled with such marginalia as "six conversations going on around the room," or "three people reading novels, one writing a letter, three talking about the weekend, two half asleep." Ironically, the three boys who paid most attention to the formal lectures (if Mr. Lennon could be said to be formal as he leaned against his desk or walked around flipping a piece of chalk), were also the most intent science students. They did not concur with his politics, but they took copious notes and asked for clarifications and further details, the way Mr. Lennon remembered many social studies students doing in years past.

He perhaps helped invite this disengagement by his unexpressed but clear anticipation that students were to get the material on their own. He lectured, provided interesting readings, told stories to illustrate abstract concepts, but he felt no obligation to structure the course in a way that monitored student effort. He would have nothing to do with daily worksheets and quizzes. He explained to me that he felt that by high school, students are adults, "I can't do the studying for them. I put it out and they can get it or not." When one-third of the class made an F on his exam, it became apparent that many had chosen not to "get it." Or they mistook the casual lecture tone for casual, unimportant content. He contributed to this distance from the learning process by backing off after seeming to make a demand of students. As will be discussed later in the report, to gain even minimal cooperation, to reduce active student protest to assignments, teachers in varying degrees taught defensively. They presented topics, then drew back when

student resistance was felt, perhaps even before it was felt. While his lectures were complicated and full, there was much dead time during the hour, during the beginning and end of the period, during times of silent reading of assignments, during other interruptions. And when he was lecturing, Mr. Lennon would frequently announce a very difficult topic, then before too many groans could be heard, he would assure students that all they would have to do would be to "read Chapter 3 in the new book," or "just look up here for a few minutes while we touch on this."

The effect of this defensive teaching in Mr. Lennon's class was to reduce all but his most interesting lectures to "just doing social studies." His politics were a novelty to the students, but meant little to them, either as something to agree with or reject. The excellence of parts of his lectures was undermined by the attitude he conveyed that he really did not expect much student interest or effort.

He was not unaware of this interaction, and reflected on its roots in his stage of life, his feelings that teaching had not resulted in changing the world, and his chafing at low pay and general undervaluing of his efforts by the administration and by society in general. In a setting where he had felt at odds with many institutional purposes and rewards, his early enthusiasm had come from caring about the students. Now that he found so few of them responding, that source of reward was disappearing as well. Only his great interest in his subject seemed to offer any compensation.

Changing the Graduation Requirements

While life in the classrooms was proceeding, Freeburg High was about to change its graduation requirements, beginning with the following year's ninth grade class. Such a change is not uncommon among high

schools and rarely provokes the level of intense debate evident at Freeburg. Perhaps its importance was that like the new building, it was a long time coming. And for this research, it was important in demonstrating the difficulties in opening knowledge access in a climate of low expectations and administrative distance.

After the modular schedule was dropped, several academic departments retained low requirements for graduation, based on the assumption that students will fill out their schedule with electives in these areas. Social studies was one area in which students did not elect to take several extra courses. For years the social studies teachers had wanted to increase the requirements, but they always met with opposition from teachers in other areas who feared layoffs in their areas if more budget were allocated for social studies positions. Even though the lack of substantial requirements in this area met with criticism from other schools and helped add to Freeburg's reputation as a less than excellent school, teachers in other departments were often more protective of what they saw as a threat to their jobs than of the reputation of the school among educators in the area.

Several factors converged to prompt the change. For one, Mr. Reznick was joined by Mr. Jackson in wanting the change. Mr. Jackson was eager for his graduate thesis to trace this reform and he contributed the time to do a survey of teachers, students, community and administrators regarding what courses and skills and areas of knowledge they saw as important. In exchange, he could serve as an observer/member of the committee comprised of board members, staff, parents, and others appointed to analyze the surveys, the accreditation reports, the staff concerns and make recommendations to the board. In addition to Mr. Jackson's contribution, one woman was described as running for

school board on the single issue of upgrading graduation requirements at the high school. Although the curriculum supervisor was seen as concerned more with elementary schools than high schools, his presence in the district had furthered a review of all programs over a period of just a few years.

Those wanting a reform were bolstered by cites of numerous surveys of school goals by such diverse groups as the Gallup polling organization, professional education journals, and the regional press. A report circulated by the state department of public instruction showed average graduation requirements in English, social studies, math, science and physical education to be substantially above Freeburg's in three of the four academic areas. Freeburg ranked in the lowest two percent of high schools in the state in social studies requirements.[2] Armed with these statistics, the committee held hearing-like meetings in order to consider the concerns and proposals of citizens and staff.

The surveys of students, staff and citizens proved the most interesting source of data. All groups cited literacy skills as very important and foreign language as unimportant. Students rated every area as less important than it was rated by staff or citizens.[3]

At the hearings there was no organized student or citizen presentation, but a dozen faculty attended regularly and gave as Mr. Jackson explained "more input than the committee had really hoped for." Mr. Jackson wrote up the surveys and the meetings for his thesis. He noted that there was frequent disagreement, but did not explain which group disagreed over which issues. Perhaps because it was formally drafted and represented many people's ideas over a long period of time, the social studies plan, as it was called, was adopted.

Its primary change was to increase social studies requirements from one year to two and one-half years, with one year being specified as United States history, or a combination of government and contemporary United States history, and one semester specified as economics or consumer economics.

It is interesting to note the impetus for these changes came from teachers rather than from the administration's overall plan for the school. The teachers found their most active support from the superintendent and curriculum coordinator, though these had to be willing to hear all sides. Mr. Morton was not a prime mover in the reform, though he did approve of the plan. Early in my semester in the school, while the debates were still in progress, a teacher told me that one of the building's assistant principals was in favor of increased requirements because it "would keep students out of the halls and keep them from leaving school early in the day." I held this impression for several weeks until a copy of the proposed plan was explained in more detail. It seemed that the administrator's support was premature: the total requirements for graduation would remain the same; the difference lay in the numbers to be specified or to be elected by students.

The chief opposition came from teachers in areas that would lose specified graduation requirements or lose anticipated student electives. While increased academic credits were subtracted mostly from elective credits, the fine arts requirement was to be reduced from one year to one semester, with vocational and business courses allowed the other semester. Tempers were very hot the night the art teachers brought a university art professor to the committee's hearing to speak against the social studies plan.

The social studies plan was adopted; the department did not then anticipate gains in faculty members at the expense of other departments. Rather, assignments would be shifted to accommodate the new United States history requirement and those in the economic areas. Mr. Lennon presented to the board his outline for the economics course; one member was reputed to have said that it was too hard, too much like a college course, and that he didn't understand it. The language of the course outline was changed to make it more intelligible to the board.

Except for this incident, Mr. Jackson said that none of the discussion of the committee or the board centered on what the content of the courses in question would be. The discussion remained on the level of course titles and credits.

The reform, gratefully received by the social studies faculty, reveals the adversarial tone underlying many of Freeburg's policies. The teacher initiatives also demonstrate the cost individual teachers bear when they try to make an improvement against traditional institutional inertia. The coincidence of several teachers' concern, Mr. Jackson's surveys, and a board member's support overcame the resistance for improvement and the conflict avoidance strategies which had determined school policy up to that time. A history of low expectations took great effort to overcome.

Thoughts on Freeburg High

To summarize Freeburg as an example of administrative-teacher relations, one looks again at individuals who had to go against the grain of their institution in order to teach, to raise standards, to try to engage students. With administration passive in academic concerns but active in promoting discipline and controls, the teachers

had to make individual decisions about how to allocate their time and efforts, how to make do with insufficient materials, how to negotiate their own authority within their limits. Mr. Jackson responded with great activity, strict classroom rules, worksheets, and an active role in trying to reform curriculum. In a sense, he by-passed the building administration by cooperating with the larger survey effort at the district level. Mr. Reznick responded by assuming the difficult task of assigning the department's slim resources equitably and by keeping up in his field. Mr. Lennon, like Mr. Harris, responded by demanding as little of students as the administration demanded of him, although he personally was inclined to demand more than that of himself.

Their proscribed position gave them little efficacy in overcoming the student attitudes which were partly caused by ever-changing administrative rules for order. Of the students, more will be said later. The overall impression of Freeburg is that students did not feel it was "their" place; teachers did not feel it was theirs; and the principal felt equally distant and out of control.

Freeburg had had a reputation of being this way for so long that it seemed it would never change. As one teacher said of the principal, "Unfortunately, he has no ambition to move on." He was wrong. Several months after the observations, Mr. Reznick told me that Mr. Morton suddenly resigned just after spring semester ended. The proximal reason was said to be a salary dispute with the board. The teachers felt very bad that Mr. Morton resigned without having a new job lined up, but felt that their concerns for the school had not gone unnoticed by the board after all. Especially during the planning of the new building, they had felt left out and overruled. Several told

of departmental meetings with architects and planners, in which teachers' needs were discussed but later overruled without consultation. This most seriously affected lab areas and shop courses, but contributed to a general faculty feeling that they were consulted only as a formality and that many changes had been arbitrary without basis in teaching needs. They were very surprised to learn that Mr. Morton apparently had felt some distance from plans for the new building as well. He left having not ordered furnishings they thought he had ordered for several areas of the building. Two teachers told me of this, perhaps, symbolic protest. Even the one most "in charge" had not felt it was "his" school either.

On paper, the structure of this school resembles that of Forest Hills. At Forest Hills, school routine and school system bureaucracy provided enough regularity that principals and teachers could pursue their own, sometimes contradictory, goals with little upheaval. Regardless of the impact on students, the teachers could salvage their authority over content and their efficiency in the classroom; the administrators could manage the building and public relations. The effects of the administrative priorities were real, as in the case of the decision to eliminate ability-group tracking, but they were subtle, almost hidden. At Freeburg, that regularity was absent. The disorder provided more opportunity for individuals like Mr. Reznick to exert influence in making changes and improvements, but brought added costs in adversarial relations and in failure to engage students. Whether a new personality within the old administrative framework will overcome the previous adversarial relations remains to be seen. The new principal, whom I met only briefly, was selected for his record of energy and program change. When I went to discuss student employment with him, for

a subsequent research project, he pulled an article from his files on the attitudinal rewards students find in work that they do not find in school. He had already given thought to the lives of his students outside school, and he gave the appearance of wanting to be kept informed about broad issues affecting youth and schools. The ambiguity that separates the administrative functions at Freeburg from the teaching roles leaves room for creative relations to link the two. Or it may again be filled with arbitrariness and discontinuities. The building crowding will be alleviated for the new principal; teacher pay scales will not. A change in personality cannot immediately create new structures or overcome resource limitations. The loose coupling between the teachers and administrators leaves room for constructive possibilities that proves the former problems not to have been inevitable. Whether the new principal succeeds depends on his ability to tap the staff resources and reconstitute order-keeping in a way that increases rather than minimizes student responsibilities.

CHAPTER 6

MAIZEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The formal structure at Maizeville High School resembled that of Forest Hills and Freeburg, with similar union contracts, an administration concerned with order-keeping, and teachers assigned to individual classrooms according to academic subjects. Despite outward similarities, the school differed from the other two schools in two important ways. First, the administrative distance from classrooms was mitigated by a strong-chairman model of departmental organization, which delegated to the chairman many duties and powers ordinarily retained by administrators. Second, the school's social studies department had a reputation for quality instruction which opened to students a wide variety of topics and learning activities. Maizeville, then, was chosen because it differed from Forest Hills in having a distant administrator but openness of content within the classroom. Its strong-chairman model demonstrates the potential for variation within traditional school structures to overcome the predominance of social control functions. A number of benefits accrued to the students, and to many of the staff, as a direct result of this arrangement.

The Community of Maizeville

Maizeville is a small farming community which has become a bedroom suburb for two nearby urban areas. Like Freeburg, Maizeville has few jobs to offer its adults and teenagers. There are few restaurants, no movies, few parks, or other sources of recreation. Maizeville is a family town. Many who live there came because housing is more

affordable and taxes are lower than in the cities where the parents work. Many students said that their mother had returned to work when energy costs rose; in other words, two parents had to commute to the city to work, in order to pay commuting and heating costs. Inflation and the need for a car has sent many of Maizeville's teenagers into the work force as well. Many worked more than twenty-five hours per week, partly to support the car needed to get to their jobs in the shopping malls and fast-food restaurants of the cities.[1] In addition, a number of farm children help seasonally on family farms or on large commercial farms that also hire non-farm children during the summers.

The town was settled by north European immigrants, and many students at the high school could trace their roots to the early settlers of the area. New families, and new housing, appeared to outnumber the old, causing a redefinition of the community over a few short years. Growth in population was causing increased school population, rare in this time of declining enrollments in most schools in this part of the state.

The High School

Maizeville High, the district's only high school, served approximately 1600 students, only slightly more than at Freeburg. Whereas the administration at Freeburg was observed to be less involved with curriculum than indicated by its reputation, the administration at Maizeville actually had a more active policy of teacher evaluation and a symbolic gesture toward curriculum oversight, than believed when the school was selected for its variation from Forest Hills. For the most part, however, traditional administrative prerogatives in these areas, which at Forest Hills and Freeburg existed but were rarely

exercised, were transferred to the strong-chair, to the extent possible within the union contract.

The teachers' lounge was filled with complaints about the principal and assistant principals, mostly about the failure to support teachers in discipline matters, about promises not kept or projects not followed through to completion. The low morale among teachers in general at the school was not typical of the social studies teachers. The lack of administrative attention to detail was, however, evident in some school maintenance areas. Only the sidewalk nearest the front door was adequately shoveled in winter; other walks and paths to parking lots often remained precariously icy. New construction, necessitated by increasing enrollments, was plagued with problems. The teaching staff was happier with the planning stages than Freeburg's staff had been about their new addition, and the social studies department looked forward to having adjacent rooms, a spacious office and proximity to the modern library. Though not a construction expert, I was surprised to see how little insulation went into the roof of the new building; the warehouse-type construction made stages of building easy to see. On returning to the school a year later, I was told the heating and cooling unit never worked properly in the new wings and that other rather basic design problems had emerged in this multi-million-dollar expansion project. The social studies rooms were an appreciated improvement, but the problems that cropped up seemed to the teachers too basic to be unavoidable.

The atmosphere of the school was generally cordial and pleasant, lacking in the intensity among the better students at Forest Hills and Nelson, but avoiding the antagonisms between staff and students at

Freeburg. A detention hall each afternoon meted punishments to the tardy or disruptive. During study hall periods, students used the detention hall room for quiet study but could go to the library or other places of business upon request. At all four schools, athletics was one of the few extracurricular activities that competed successfully with the time demands of student jobs. Maizeville, in addition, had a small but strong music and drama cohort.

The principal anticipated that about half the graduates would enroll in technical or undergraduate schools. Classes were tracked by ability levels, rare among schools in southern Wisconsin during this time. Whereas the faculty at Forest Hills had fought to preserve tracking, but had lost out to central administration shifts toward homogeneous classes to avoid appearances of discrimination, the teachers at Maizeville were committed to altering curriculum and materials to suit several levels of student ability. They felt this could best be done in tracked classes, including basic or lowest level, general level, advanced, and in some subjects on honors level. According to the chairman of social studies, the teachers' wishes had influence since the district was small, they had no other high schools in the town to coordinate with, and they had fewer layers of bureaucracy to cut through. The unique feature of Maizeville's tracking system was that students could participate in the decision for placement. Several staff people told me that students tracked themselves. The chairman explained that the initial assignment came from the previous year's teacher in each subject, but that students could elect a higher track if they wished. At the end of a nine-weeks or semester grading period, if the teacher felt a student could not perform at that level, the placement would be reassessed with the student, the counselor and perhaps the parents. No

permission would be granted to elect a lower level unless extreme circumstances warranted it; wanting free time for a job or an "easy senior year" were not accepted as reasons for a lower track placement. In social studies the enthusiasm among the staff for this plan was high; several teachers requested teaching upper level classes, and all taught some middle level courses. One woman in particular was committed to teaching the lower-ability students and developed her materials especially for this group, though other teachers were assigned to that level when needed. Her special expertise with that group prevented the status stratification that can occur within departments when high status accrues to those teaching upper level or honors classes.

Staff and Structure

About twelve years prior to the observation, the school organization had shifted from a traditional principal-teacher plan common to schools such as Freeburg to a strong-chairman model of organization. The "strong chairman" was called a department coordinator and given a salary increment higher than that previously paid to department chairs. In addition, these coordinators were given greater responsibilities, and to fill them, more extensive powers. The coordinator, or strong chairman, acted as the administrator in all curriculum areas and in as many staffing areas as permitted within the guidelines of the union contract. In many departments, those teacher-administrator boundaries were observed more in letter than in spirit. The result was that the administrators, the principal and assistant principals, retained their authority over discipline and the signing of personnel evaluations. Authority over the substance of curriculum, the management of departmental budgets and the substance of evaluation and improvement were delegated to the chairman. The principal's distance from classroom con-

cerns and preoccupation with order-keeping was thereby less of a threat, or a source of antagonisms than that relationship held at Freeburg.

Among the responsibilities delegated to the department coordinator, or strong chair, were the interviewing of prospective faculty members, observing in classrooms, making recommendations for instructional improvement, ordering of materials, and providing the basic substance of teacher evaluations discussed and signed by the principal. The coordinator could bargain for resource budgets for his department, could participate in encouraging faculty members to resign, could oversee the revision of courses or the development of new ones. In addition, responsibility for developing articulation with junior high curriculum and for tracking decisions lay with the coordinator. These responsibilities implied powers beyond that of the chairman at Freeburg or Forest Hills, where the role remained confined to helping schedule courses and teachers, planning budget allocations within funds set by the principal or central administration, and informal interaction with colleagues regarding course content or teaching styles. Such restraints as not being permitted to contact a publisher directly, as Mr. Lennon found at Freeburg, would have been unheard of, even unworkable under the strong-chair model.

Whereas the teachers at Freeburg would have welcomed such a model as a gift of new privileges, the administration at Maizeville saw the plan as serving their interests even more than those of the faculty. The principal and assistant principal interviewed explained that almost half their time was spent "tracking down truants." When pressed for numbers, they estimated that only 100 students were truancy problems. But "those same kids" took enormous amounts of clerical and administrative energies to locate, process paperwork on, and bring

to the attention of their parents. The principal further noted that though school attendance is mandatory under the law, the juvenile courts in this jurisdiction do not support the school in prosecuting truancy. Suspensions for the offense are "a laugh," since they reward absence with absence, usually for students whose poor grades would not demonstrably suffer for the loss. The administration position on parents' roles are equally critical. The principal said that most of the truants had family problems or a history of drug usage. Of the family situation, he said that the parents often did not support the school in discipline matters. Often neither parent was home, or even in town, because of jobs in surrounding cities. When they heard of the problem, they tended to blame the school rather than their own inaccessibility. As the principal told it, "The kid does the same thing in the summer but no one sees it. When school starts, he does these things and misses school. Since the parent hasn't heard of the behavior before, he thinks it's the school's problem."

In addition, the administrators felt unqualified to have a more active role in curriculum development and evaluation. They said they could not be an expert in every subject area and so did not want all the responsibility for content. The assistant principal assigned to oversee social studies explained that he had no expertise or experience in the field, but had several relatives who did. He himself enjoyed reading history and had an interest in the subject. He approved of the school's policy of rotating the subject area assignments of the assistant principals every two or three years so that all became acquainted with the various departments. The gain in knowledge of the overall program offset the loss in extended oversight of a narrower range of departments.

For the teachers, the delegation of curriculum matters to the coordinator filled an intellectual vacuum in the school. One coordinator stressed that "we have never had intellectual leadership in this school." The school district had an assistant superintendent for curriculum coordination but none of the faculty knew what this person did. Although in the past the job had on occasion served as a stepping-stone to the superintendent's office, or to such a job with another district, several of the teachers did not know where this person's office was located.

The delegation of considerable powers to the coordinator made the department as a whole more cohesive. In social studies, the present coordinator had hired half the present faculty. The arrangement centralized the department's leverage with the administration in the proposing of new courses or budget changes. While those departments whose coordinators chose not to exercise strong leadership did not suffer under this arrangement any more than under a traditional chairmanship, the plan gave wide latitude to those departments or coordinators who did want to be active in building their department's reputation within the school or among similar departments in the state.

According to the principal, some coordinators chose a passive role, perhaps because they accepted the appointment reluctantly, because the department was small, or because they had no interest in expanding their own administrative powers with their accompanying loads of paperwork and decisions. Most coordinators, however, found the freedom to make decisions worth the extra trouble in attention to detail.

The strong chairman/coordinator model filled a purpose in giving administrators a method of offering rewards and sanctions. As men-

tioned in the introduction to the case studies, similar union contracts at all four schools specified seniority and workload issues, with rigid pay scales for years of service, degrees of education, and additional responsibilities of activity sponsorship or coaching. Administrative discretion to withhold, decrease, delay, or increase pay or other rewards for merit was absent. When the assistant principal at Maizeville was describing varying teacher effort and competence, he was asked whether he felt frustrated that there were so few reward and sanction mechanisms by which administrators could affect teacher competence. His answer was more blunt than that of most administrators interviewed on this same topic, but its spirit was typical of their perception of what motivates teachers: "Most of us just want to do a good job, and you know it, and that's all the reward you really need. In fact, I personally, when I have an evaluation, requested the principal not to put anything good, . . . if something was done wrong, I don't want to know I'm not doing wrong, otherwise how can you improve? But, now that's a little different with teachers, and, it's a little different story, now as far as incentive, you know I don't think that they're discriminated against because you can't give them money, or we don't get any bonus. . . .Monetarily you can't reward a teacher and that's a shame, you know, and that budegtary things are getting more and more critical each year with the cost controls, there's just no doubt about that. But you know the only way you can really do it is verbally, and throw a medal once in a while and sign it or if they do something outstanding, ah, write up a special letter and thank them for it and so forth. Or verbal appreciation. . . .If you think of incentive systems, there's a variety of ways, you know you are talking about time, you're talking about money, you're talking about letters of thanks or verbal thanks.

And I really can't think of anything else" (emphasis added).

He felt that salary bonuses for extra hours, for added attention to students needing extra help, for creative course development would not be the reward for which teachers working extra were taking on extra tasks, and they would backfire by causing dissention among teachers not receiving such bonuses. When asked whether rewards for taking on extra projects, or enriching standard courses, or meeting with students needed individual help might take the form of aides, added course budgets, smaller class sizes or other "working condition" adjustments, the assistant principal said that verbal thanks was the only way he could think of to thank teachers for their efforts.

The restrictions on negative evaluations are not so limited by imagination as by bureaucratic and union formal guidelines. For a negative evaluation to result in the teacher's reassignment to a different task or removal from the payroll, the requirements are bound up in legalities which administrators find time-consuming and vulnerable to law suits. Any misconduct, failure to perform classroom duties, or other serious inadequacy can be dealt with only after being carefully documented as to time, place, nature of offense, witnesses, effects on students and relation to school policy. To say that a teacher is not "a good teacher" or "does conduct his class effectively" is not reason for taking procedures against that teacher. The teacher has to be absent from class frequently, failing to grade papers and give them back to students, or otherwise shirking assigned duties in observable, concrete ways.

Rather than undertake these procedures which are costly in administrator time, unfavorable publicity and staff ill-will, the

administrators said that they occasionally would use the threat of the formal procedures as leverage for pressuring teachers to improve. Because teacher improvement is so closely tied to course content, the administrators were pleased to delegate the applying of pressure on teachers to the departmental coordinators who did share the teachers' subject matter expertise.

Retained by the administrators are the formal, paper evaluations of each non-probationary teacher. Within broad course outlines developed within the daprtment, the teacher submits periodic lesson plans to the office for filing. The principal then uses these for the two-fold purpose of providing a framework for substitute teachers to follow and of guiding the administrator's annual visit to the classroom. The use made of the guide is somewhat symbolic: The principal said that prior to a classroom visit by an administrator, the administrator will pull the folder to see what the teacher listed as the subject of the day. He said, "If you go in there and the teacher is showing them a movie on the Civil war and [the lesson plan says they are] in the Revolution, you know that something is wrong." More subtle evaluative judgments are left to the department coordinators.

For the administrators, the strong chair/coordinator model relieved them of the direct impact of one set of pressures. They could not avoid the pressures of feeling ineffectual to control student attendance. The assistant principal described the students as "having no fear." With good-paying jobs, more discretionary income than many of their teachers, and an adult sensibility that came from commuting to the city to work after school hours or a false adulthood provided by drink or drugs, the students were not easily manipulated by disciplinary threats at school: "...the kids don't have a sense of fear anymore.

They're not afraid of anybody. They're not afraid of the police; they're not afraid of local authorities, they're not afraid of their parents; they are not afraid of courts. There's no fear. And in the past, you know, you used to be afraid of . . . . the threatening would scare them; they were a little bit afraid. They're not afraid. They want to act like adults but they don't want to assume the responsibility of adults."

If intractable students challenged the administrative control efforts, disinterested teachers challenged the educational goals. In the assistant principal's mind, this disinterest extended to teacher's refusal to handle discipline, including staying after school, thus the need for a detention hall. And their inability or unwillingness to explain lessons enough times for all students to understand. To provide attention to students of all abilities, without expensive resource personnel, the school retained ability tracking. To deal with instruction and classroom competency more closely but in ways that did not intrude on administrator time or reveal administrator inadequacies, the strong chair/coordinator model was established. This helped overcome what the assistant principal saw as teaching's primary problem: "I guess probably the biggest problem that I've seen in education, whether it's here or other high schools I've been in, there's a kind of indifference. You know -- I'll do my job, but that's it; I'll leave. I don't think that it's hard to really pinpoint what it is, but there isn't an awful lot of devoted people. That's my personal feeling." He paused and added, " I feel Sam is devoted."

Mr. Carrico and Social Studies

To see the strong chair/coordinator model working its optimum, one must turn to Sam Carrico, the chairman of the social studies depart-

ment. He and the math coordinator were thought by the administration and faculty to be the teachers who took positive advantage of the strong-chair model, both for their careers and for their departments and students. Mr. Carrico combined the broad discretionary powers delegated formally and informally by the administration with a strong entrepreneurial drive of his own. He sought out leadership in professional organizations, in economics education and social studies, at the state and national levels. In addition to his teacher and coordinating obligations within the school, he ran a small service business after school hours, as he put it, "that's our Acapulco trips." He created the job, which is too unique to describe without revealing his identity, marshalled students and other teachers needing outside income, and developed a business that brought in income over several years' time. He served on a local governmental board and managed to attend workshops at universities and governmental agencies each summer related to social studies issues. A strong, aggressive individual, who talked freely about his own energies and aggressive approach to his role, Mr. Carrico dressed more like a professional or businessman than like a social studies teacher in this part of the state, wearing bright sports jackets and ties, conveying a dynamic quality (and affluent appearance) beyond what most teachers went to the trouble for. He told his students he often came to school at 4:30 in the morning, to get work done without missing seeing his children.

Mr. Carrico's personal and professional pride and his energetic approach to problems prompted him to take full advantage of the authority conveyed upon the strong-chair role. After twelve years in the job, he had hired half the social studies staff and been instrumental in develop-

ing the department's philosophy and course offerings. The administrators took his word on hiring decisions and mostly relied on his judgments for staff evaluations within the department. He said that he frequently visited other teacher's classes and came up with ideas to help them improve. He sought staff ideas about new courses or revisions of current ones. He took the lead in seeking out new materials for his own course and for others in the department and encouraged other teachers to take similar initiatives. As a result of his leadership in searching for good materials and of his aggressive pressing for department budgets, the social studies department was extremely well supplied with current simulation games, films, texts, auxiliary books, and other instructional materials. He was proud that his own energies seemed contagious, that other teachers responded to his concern for quality with equal concern.

His strong personality and considerable powers over peers could have made Mr. Carrico very unpopular. His sense of humor helped alleviate some of his strong will; some on the staff took his ego with a grain of salt. Others were grateful to have more adequate materials than their counterparts at other schools in the region, and they were grateful to Mr. Carrico for helping build their department's standing within the school and for helping to put the school "on the map" among other high schools and especially other social studies departments in the state. The school was chosen because state department of public instruction personnel and other teachers insisted that no study of social studies in the state would be complete without Mr. Carrico. His colleagues within the school knew that when they bothered to put forth effort, their efforts would be supported and made more

productive under Mr. Carrico's chairmanship. His active use of his teaching role, giving speeches on new ways to explain economics concepts at professional meetings or stepping into positions of leadership within the community, contrasted dramatically with the defensive positions taken by teachers at Freeburg and Forest Hills, who felt underpaid and under-appreciated and better unobtrusive than visible.

His peers tolerated his role in their evaluations because they knew him to be more knowledgeable about their methods and subject matter than the administrative staff. Of the principal, one remarked, "How can he know what's going on?" Expectations of administrative interest in course content or instructional method were low, but less tension-filled than at Freeburg where evaluations were more haphazard. Whatever Mr. Carrico would say to an administrator about a staff member had probably already been conveyed to that staff member when it became an issue, whether it was a need for improvement or an occasion for praise. Mr. Carrico saw his evaluative role in terms of "process evaluation," or improvement rather than summary judgments for or against his peers. The others were not obligated to agree, and would in turn have their own conferences with the administrators much like those held at Forest Hills. Any demands he made on their time, including out of class preparation, extra hours beyond the minimum, Mr. Carrico was putting in as well. He had tried to hire people who would take their teaching seriously and had no patience with clock punchers.

His rewards to teachers could include allowing them to arrange their schedules to suit them, assigning favored courses to teach, and in many subtle ways making conditions better for their work. As noted, negative rewards are more varied at the administrative level, and can include numbers of threats and possible dismissal; positive rewards

for staff efforts at that level are limited to the administrator's imagination, usually to thank you. At the level of the department coordinator, the range of positive rewards for hard-working teachers is much broader, especially since it includes informal tasks, input into departmental policy, the chance to develop new courses, and other matters directly related to work in the classroom, and has the potential of being continuous throughout the school year rather than concentrated at a single evaluation conference.

By delegating so many matters to the strong chair, the administration demonstrated one method at their disposal for rewarding teachers. Certainly the teacher with the most seniority and years of extra effort was chosen as coordinator in this department. In addition, the tensions between the educative goals and social control goals, very prominent at this school as at Freeburg and Forest Hills, could be resolved productively in many instances. For example, the administrations's yielding to the expertise of subject matter specialists in determining most policy avoided the faculty backlash seen in Forest Hills teachers' responses to de-tracking and the Freeburg teachers' resistance to rule changes made without their consent. The Maizeville faculty could be used more for teaching than for "putting out fires," as at Freeburg. Some standards of evaluation were more clear, as well, including items such as how the teacher dealt with high- and low-ability students. Finally, the administration was able to use the strong chair model to reward extra effort. Not only were the most competent teachers the ones considered for the chairmanships, but others in the departments were not neglected. The strong chair advocacy of departmental concerns rewarded those departments willing to hash

out cohesive policies and collective requests, whether for budgets, curriculum revisions or staffing. While the similarity between administrators and their concerns at Freeburg and Maizeville make it very unlikely that individual teachers would have faired any better at Maizeville than at Freeburg in having influence, the Maizeville teachers had the added leverage of a central advocate in the strong chair. In the case of the social studies department, this advocate was forceful and respected, so faculty input was considerable. The periodic meeting of the coordinators tended to be more substantive than a regular faculty meeting, many of which consisted ofreading announcements. In the absence of a faculty senate, these meetings provided a forum for faculty to remember the existence of the other departments and recall their department's place in the overall program, with or without strong agreements or policies emerging from the meetings.

That the arrangement suited all concerned better than the more fragmented, adversarial roles had plagued the Freeburg teachers, was evident in the responses to the differing parties to certain policies. Mr. Carrico felt that his attendance at professional meetings provided a service to the school because he came in contact with new ideas and materials long before he would have it the contact depended on mailed ads or library or university course work. He clearly liked giving talks and attending these meetings, but he saw them as advantageous to all the staff. To the principal, the trips were ways the school had of rewarding his efforts. The principal indicated that he thought of the permission to attend as a favor granted to Mr. Carrico rather than as an assignemnt for Mr. Carrico to represent the school or to search for new materials.

Maizeville Classrooms

The real test of the strong chair model of organization has to be its impact on classrooms. As mentioned, one impact most directly felt was the role of the chair in hiring. Mr. Carrico had hired teachers he felt would be hard-working. Some he hired away from other school systems; others came to Maizeville for their first job. Most of the teachers in the department took advantage of the resources Mr. Carrico helped assemble and responded by collecting materials on their own. Motivation was high for developing new courses. An ecology course developed just prior to the observations was a rare link with another department, in this case science. While I was at the school, plans were being drawn for a psychology course within the social studies department. An active view of the teaching role and an absence of walls between official knowledge and teachers' personal knowledge greatly opened up information and resources to students. When I commented that they seemed to have "adequate" resources, Mr. Carrico jumped on the word adequate, saying that they had a wealth of resources. Unlike the teachers at Freeburg, who never had enough copies of their books, Mr. Carrico said that their problem at Maizeville was remembering what they had so that they could use it. He said that sometimes storage was such a problem that good materials would be forgotten for awhile before being retrieved and used again. (He thought the new additions of classrooms, office and storage would allow materials to be stored more systematically and accessibly; now every nook in his office and in some rooms was filled with filmstrip sets, extra books, and printed instructional aids.) An added resource which prompted teacher partici-

pation in the development of resources was the access the teachers had to good videotape recording equipment and staff. An audio-visual staff would set timers to pre-tape television programs for teachers. In addition, the availability of the equipment and videotape players gave teachers incentive to return to school at night to tape documentaries orhistorical news retrospectives if no staff was available to do it. This added a timeliness absent in the Bob Hope Korean War films shown at Forest Hills and an improvement in quality over the stuffy room and poor quality of tapes at Freeburg.

The general pattern, then, of impact on the classroom was of setting a lively tone, of establishing expectations that teaching and learning were still going on, and of providing materials and atmosphere conducive to generating more materials and ideas. The administrative concern for truancy could not impact on classrooms by its diminishing the role of content, as at Freeburg, or by its concern for budgets and credits, as at Forest Hills. Though Mr. Carrico was known to "fill the room" when he entered, the teachers knew that without the strong chair model and without his particular leadership, their department would have had a smaller share of resources and less autonomy in developing interesting courses. Their impatience with his potentially domineering personality was tempered by the fact that his aggressiveness paid off in the community and in the office when he represented them.

That is the general picture. The classroom observations focused on two teachers whose classes present perhaps the extremes of ways teachers can respond to the benefits and drawbacks of this model. The first is Mr. Carrico's own class, mainly because he, like Mr. Harris at Forest Hills, taught history from the perspective of one trained in

economics. The second is Mr. Seager a teacher who resembled Mr. Lennon at Freeburg for the inconsistency of his methods and effectiveness.

Mr. Carrico's upper level junior history class provided a good insight into his teaching methods and into his use of the working conditions he had helped to provide. It was one of the few classes observed in which students were required to discuss, read, and write. Interestingly, it was one of the few classes in which students' names were frequently spoken by the teacher. The class consisted of about twenty juniors and was the second year of a two-year history sequence. In contrast to the defensive position of social studies at Freeburg, the staff at Maizeville had insisted, under Mr. Carrico's leadership, that history be a two-year requirement. Mr. Carrico explained that this allowed "post-holing," or going into detail rather than skimming through a survey. Sociology and economics were also required, as one-semester courses. "And that's just setting the table." Electives beyond that three-year sequence included ecology, advanced economics, and other traditional social studies electives.

The semester of the observations dealt with the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and covered such economics topics as the rise of industrialization and its effects on the economy and social life of the country, the trust-busting days of Roosevelt, the Gilded Age preceding him and the economic booms and busts that followed. Mr. Carrico combined a number of teaching strategies. He assigned readings in a book which contained paired, opposing interpretations of historical issues or events. In addition, he occasionally showed films and assigned book reviews on historical topics. His primary means of conveying information was through lectures and directed discussion. His lectures carried

none of the connotations of tightly controlled information evidenced at Forest Hills. He frequently chased asides, stopped to re-explain abstract concepts, interjected personal opinions or related current news items, and paced between his desk and the blackboard. The outline for the lesson would be on the board when students entered, or written as he talked. It did not substitute for extended descriptions and analyses as Mr. Schmidt's transparency outlines did.

In an interview at the end of the semester, Mr. Carrico outlined his goals for the history sequence. As the child of immigrants, he wanted the students to have a strong sense of their own cultural heritage and that of others: "They owe it to Thomas Jefferson, to Abraham Lincoln, even to Nixon, and they owe it to the future generations. You need to know the road you're traveling. You need to know these things weren't heaven-sent. There was a Gilded Age, there were immigrants. . . ." In addition, he thought students needed economics "purely to function." Without information "you're at the mercy of somebody else." He structured his courses to combine theoretical concepts with "factual" history. His teaching style was as assertive as his dealings with the administration. He actually was one of the few teachers to call students by name when addressing them. He called on students with leading, recitation questions, but also called on them to comment on their work or behavior. He had a store of humorous phrases which punctuated the lectures with opinion and perhaps control. He might stop in mid-sentence to say, "Mary, you're flying over Denver. Come back to class." On more than one occaison, he commented in front of the class on a student's papers: "George, by the way, I have to tell you your book review was very thorough. That's a great improve-

ment over that last test you handed in." He had one or two students he teased, usually over a long period of time so that the running joke provided a theme-and-variation of humor. He said he carefully picked only those students who could take teasing; clearly, this was one way of keeping the class alert and participating. He made assignments, expected them to be in, graded them with comments as well as letter grades, and at times had students read each other's papers on a topic.

The openness of information in this class, the teacher's lack of boundaries between his personal knowledge and the course content, the greater amount of student contribution in written and oral form, the varied use of resources, -- all differed markedly from the tight patterns of knowledge access at Forest Hills. The students, however, retained some suspicion of course content. They appreciated his expertise, and many felt his apparent affluence gave him more credibility than most, poorer social studies teachers would have on economics topics. They felt constrained, however, in presenting their own ideas. They felt, unlike Miss Langer's students, that student talk was valued but expressed in interviews frustration at being unable to disagree with Mr. Carrico. Some were intimidated by his strong personality; others felt inadequate to address impromptu a subject on which he was prepared and knowledgeable. Most experienced some suspicion of belief of course content similar to that expressed by Forest Hills students, but those who did said it was more because of their own lack of knowledge rather than because his information directly contradicted other sources they had consulted. It was interesting that one group who did question his opinions was the students holding outside jobs. Several students at Nelson and Maizeville disagreed with their teachers over the benefits

and safety of nuclear power. One girl at Maizeville directly disagreed with Mr. Carrico's assessment of safe and necessary nuclear power plants. She did not speak up in class, but spoke at length in her interview about her own experiences. She had been working for some time at a facility for severely handicapped children. Many of these were the children of x-ray technicians and others working around radiation. She had seen the birth defects and had been interested enough to investigate the family histories of some of the children. While she would never be convinced by Mr. Carrico, neither would she have shared this information with the class. Most students felt less sure of their divergent opinions and felt that even if they were proved to be right, the interchange would damage their persuasiveness because of their lack of expertise as compared with his. Other students, in commenting on which sources of information they learned from, concluded the lectures were most beneficial, the books valuable only after the explanatory lectures, and the teacher open to varied opinions. Mr. Carrico's class, then, was contradictory in demanding much more of students and requiring active participation, but being so strongly informational as to intimidate dissent.

A part of the success of Mr. Carrico's history class was that these students were high in motivation and achievement. Almost all felt themselves to be college bound. They were reflective students, with many outside interests such as jobs, music, and volunteer work. I asked Mr. Carrico whether he would be able to expect equal compliance with middle or lower level students. He assured me that he demanded work of all students. He said that the lower level needs satisfaction and successes; he advocated structuring assignments so as to give immediate

success, since for some of these low-achieving students the hindrance to learning is the feeling of past failures as much as actual intellectual capacity. He said that he assigned simpler readings to middle level students, not using for example the book with paired readings, since even upper level students said it was the hardest to understand of all their assignments. But he did not draw back and make no demands on them, as he felt usually happened in non-tracked classes, where the teacher gives up, teaches to the lower middle and loses everyone in the process. He felt no constraints on his teaching, from truancy and drugs, to parent attitudes, to resources, to staff relations. "If you can't teach at Maizeville, you can't teach."

While most of his colleagues took advantage of the breadth of resources to bring students actively into the learning process, Mr. Seager did not. Mr. Seager taught sociology and middle level history students. He was as casual as Mr. Carrico was intense. His class was very small and could have given opportunity for very individualized instruction, with explanations and assignments geared to the specific needs of the group. Instead, Mr. Seager followed a pattern much like that of Mr. Lennon at Freeburg where resources were not so abundant. Mr. Seager used the resources at Maizeville to reduce his efforts rather than increase them. His lectures were brilliant, when he lectured. He too had been a child of immigrants. He also had been active in teacher unions and in elective politics. When he drew on these experiences, the students listened attentively. They expressed in interviews their respect for his wide range of experience and travel and for his grasp of the real world of politics and economics. Like Mr. Lennon's students, they saw that this teacher had a great deal to give.

Partly because of health problems, partly because of indifferent students, and perhaps because of declining interest or confidence in his own ability to affect students, Mr. Seager demanded little of students. He assigned readings in class, even using inquiry-based, Socratic materials for silent seatwork. He drew on the extensive film collection to show a film several days per week. To his credit, he went to great trouble to build up the school's file of videotaped television documentaries and televised historical events; these he showed with frequency.

Mr. Seager did not want to limit students' knowledge of the subject, nor was he interested in consensus models of history and politics. He wanted students to care about his concerns but did not structure the course in a way that pulled students into the learning process. Mr. Carrico, who had hired Mr. Seager away from another school system many years ago when they had worked together in state social studies organization work, felt that Mr. Seager was very bright and informed but unable to teach. His inefficacy in the classroom stemmed, according to Mr. Carrico, from his false confidence that knowing the information enables one to teach it effectively.

Mr. Seager also had a different view of students. Whereas Mr. Carrico felt free to yell at students, cajole them, tease them into cooperation, Mr. Seager felt that some students needed a place in the school where they felt welcome. He had several boys in this small class who were frequently absent. Rather than put them in the hands of the truant-trackers, he would give them chances to make up work or return to class unpenalized. His rationale was that if he pressed them too far, they would drop out of school, that his was the only class some of them felt free to come to. Two of the boys appeared to be on drugs part of the time they were in class. When asked about this pattern, Mr. Carrico dis-

agreed strongly with the strategy, saying that failing to demand something of students does not convey a message of liking them, that his response to similar students is to tell them to shape up or ship out.

With the uneven attendance and student passivity, Mr. Seager nevertheless proceeded to teach a great deal of history. He was personally knowledgeable about certain Indian tribes, about behind-the-scenes politics, about labor issues, about western geography and farming, about many subjects which came up in the course. When he lectured about these topics, the students paid attention, asked questions, and mentally participated. They did not take notes and some did not do classwork assignments, which consisted of answering questions at the end of in-class readings. Like Mr. Lennon, Mr. Seager had not come to terms with institutional demands. At his former school, he had been the Mr. Carrico, developing new programs, gathering resources on a slim budget, hiring in good teachers. His role at Maizeville had with passing years become less active. Like Mr. Carrico, he worked outside of school at a job which provided needed supplementary income, and like Mr. Carrico, he was self-employed and dependent on his creative energies to keep the business going. It was a popular business, one that did not intrude on school time, except perhaps in affecting his energy levels. He too had community standing beyond the teacher role and took and active interest in affairs around him.

Mr. Seager's reduced teaching efforts point to one problem with the strong-chair model. It is no less likely to defer or abdicate responsibility than the traditional administrator is when negative evaluations are called for. Mr. Carrico said that he constantly tried to get Mr. Seager to prepare his lessons more carefully, to make assigmments,

to grade student papers more thoroughly. Perhaps this was true. According to Mr. Carrico, he always approached Mr. Seager on the basis of his expertise, his competence in the subject and his past efforts. These comments were aimed at improvement rather than censure.

Mr. Seager may be unfairly singled out here because of his health problems during that semester. A return to the school over a year later found him to be much more energetic, more upbeat about his teaching and his students. One of his problems had been that the students did not share his keen interest in history; he had not realized that backing off lecturing did not solve that problem but only made it worse because it was his lectures which students found so informative. Their reading problems, poor study habits and short attention spans were overcome by his spinning of historical lore. His lectures were more like story-telling and students became caught up in them, as they did not in doing seatwork.

Even if singled out unfairly, it has been necessary to review Mr. Seager's situation simply because it points to the fact that how individuals use and respond to their institutional structures helps determine the impact of those structures in accomplishing their goals. In this case, the strong chair did no more than an administrator would have done in sanctioning the weak pattern of teaching in this class. On the other hand, the strong chair did far more to motivate and reward hard-working teachers than would have been true under a traditional school framework.

One last weakness of the strong chair model must be noted: it does not necessarily provide for examination of the impact of instruction and of content on the students. At all the schools, teachers have very

limited views of what students can contribute to the learning process. Student talk is considered disruption at Forest Hills, and student effort is so unexpected at Freeburg that few meaningful assignments are made. The low expectations Mr. Seager had of students is not entirely surprising. One example of student requirements that was surprising was a mock trial in Mr. Carrico's class. He had a fair amount of success in having certain students go to senior citizens to interview them about the town and the memories they had of the Depression. He had less success with the mock trial of Harry Truman for the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Students were assigned to role play the American and Japanese government and scientific leaders; another student was assigned to each side for examining witnesses. Mr. Carrico gave the students some advance preparation time, but no explanations of role playing or of the basic issues to look for in studying about their character. The trial began with a scientist taking the stand but testifying about himself in the third person. One student was in character, but the person interrogating did not know what to ask. Gradually, Mr. Carrico began to interject comments, clarifying characters or raising issues. Finally, the students drifted back to their seats while he took up the topic in lecture. After class, he told me, "I knew that would happen."

What became apparent after that experience was that the administrative-teacher structure could have considerable impact on what teachers require of themselves and each other. It was less clear whether the structure observed so far had the capacity to evaluate the impact of knowledge forms on students, and indeed, the credibility of school knowledge itself. Teachers at Maizeville were more aware of instructional differ-

ences because the chair made it a point to know. So there was more interchange about the nature of assignments, forms of testing than at the other schools. Because these issues are so closely associated with academic freedom and personal style, they are rarely broached even within a close department. For that reason, even a structure like the strong chair model has greater capacity to influence the accessibility of school knowledge than to consider what impact that knowledge and those ways of knowing are having on students.

Even with these drawbacks, the strong chair model of organization overcame many of the constraints common to schools where administration emphasize order and control. While the administrators at Maizeville tracked truants and kept the building running, the social studies department was free to teach, supported by abundant materials, tangible and intangible rewards for their extra efforts, and a collegial framework. The chief problem emerging as many younger teachers built up experience was the dilemma of sharing the strong chair position in turn without losing the momentum and continuity built up by Mr. Carrico. In order to keep these teachers, it might become necessary to let them share in the responsibility. Given the intense nature of the coordinator position, this rotation might prove to be beneficial to those who have held the position as well. Whether this ever became necessary, it was clear that this structure offered the staff many constructive supports in a more adversarial teacher-administrator relationship.

CHAPTER 7

NELSON HIGH SCHOOL

Nelson High was known among social studies teachers, university professors of education, state department of public instruction officials and neighboring communities as the high school with "academic" principals. It was chosen for its variation from Forest Hills in the closeness with which administrative personnel worked with teachers in support of instruction and with the openness of course content to students. While the structures at Maizeville and Freeburg varied somewhat from their reputations, the Nelson High organization bore out its image of a collegial place for teachers and administrators to work together. During the observation period, the curriculum and staff organization reflected many years of working toward this goal; in the year following the field work, declining enrollments and potential faculty lay-offs clouded this otherwise constructive relationship.

The Community of Nelson Heights

Nelson Heights and Blackhawk were small suburban communities which also served some rural families. Nelson High served both communities, drawing from elementary and junior high schools in the separate towns. Nelson Heights was characterized by residential areas and small businesses, and Blackhawk by residential areas of working class and middle class families. There was no significant industry in the towns, and many parents drove to nearby cities to work in high technology, government, and service industries. A number of parents of Nelson High students owned their own businesses

in Nelson Heights or the nearest city. Large numbers of the students held jobs outside of school hours in retailing, fast food places, and clerical or mechanical work.

The two communities had had the option during the 1950's of continuing to send their children to schools in the nearest big city. They chose instead to risk higher taxes in order to keep their children out of the more bureaucratic school system and nearer to home in schools the community could influence and watch over. They did not want their children to become "lost" in a bigger, more impersonal school system; they wanted schools that served the needs of Nelson Heights children. From the beginning, then, the Nelson Heights schools reflected community support, conscious attempts to work out an educational philosophy compatible with the varied population within the district, and a sense of responsibility among citizens for the welfare of the school. There had been no divisive battles over bond issues, as in Freeburg, just to guarantee safe, functional buildings. In fact, the science chairman told me that the building constructed for the high school was the least expensive per square feet of any high school in the state; it was not as elegant as the schools built in the 1920's nor as shiny modern as many contemporary schools, but its physical layout was planned with instructional needs in mind and its economy reflected careful budgeting. A man was hired to be the principal-superintendent in those early years; he and another few staff members were hired to work during the year of building construction on a philosophy for the school system, building on the community's desire for an education that would be strong in skills and in human values about how to live in the world. The teachers

hired to open the school were hired with forewarning of this philosophy and their obligation to work within it.

The history of principals was a key to the establishing of a school beneficial to the students and the community. Nelson High was known in the region as the only high school with a history of "academic" principals, principals whose beginnings as classroom teachers had not been rationalized into bureaucratic modes by their advanced degrees in educational administration, principals who could discuss subject matter and instruction with teachers from informed and involved concern. Best known was Mr. Shepherd, who had served as principal longest. At the time of the field work, Mr. Shepherd had just been promoted to assistant superintendent in charge of instruction. He still came by the school to chat with teachers over lunch or discuss business with the new principal. There were no social class or status walls separating Mr. Shepherd from the teachers; they were friends, proud of the school they had built together. With a new principal interested in carrying out Mr. Shepherd's model of organization but less strong in several academic areas, the teachers still sought out Mr. Shepherd for consultations over program improvement.

The program Mr. Shepherd helped build was a unified curriculum within broad subject fields. In the early sixties, the faculty and administrators had held workshops to determine the future curriculum and organization of the school. By the mid-sixties they had put in place a curriculum in which narrow specializations within broad subject fields were interwoven into courses developed along complex interdisciplinary themes. Teachers were hired who were willing to

teach in coordination with others in their departments, who were willing to develop their own curriculum and share in developing curriculum with their colleagues, who would not seek the privacy and efficiency of single-teacher isolated classrooms. Teachers unwilling to participate in this collegiality were pressured by the comprehensiveness of the plan to seek employment in a school where they could find their autonomous classrooms. Those hired were the ones who demonstrated expertise in broad fields. For example, science was not divided into specialities such as biology, geology, and chemistry. These separate fields were meshed in a four-year sequence built around topics on ecology, energy, scientific investigation and so on. A physics teacher who knew little biology or did not want to teach chemistry would not be a successful job candidate at this school.

In exchange for teachers yielding some autonomy over their classroom content, the administration provided many supports for collegial curriculum building. Each department was given an office for meeting students, exchanging ideas or storing materials; the chairman had an office in the departmental office area. The resource center for each were, where possible, positioned between the departmental offices and the rest of the library holdings. Each department received a part-time aide and a secretary. Over the years as teaching jobs became scarce, the aide was often an otherwise unemployed teacher qualified to help students in the resource center, help in materials development or otherwise contribute to more than the paperwork of the department. Very special to the social studies chairman and the teacher he teamed with was the secretary, who could take their rough diagrams for learning models and turn them into attractive, clear

teaching instruments because she understood the content and purpose as well as the typing or layout procedures.

The role of the chair was something between the Freeburg-Forest Hills model of keeper of department schedules and records and liaison between the department and the administration, and the Maizeville model of delegated administrative authority. The chairman at Nelson High saw his role in the social studies department as helper to the teachers, as their representative to the principal, as co-ordinator of schedules and overseer of programs. He had good rapport with the teachers in his department and did not presume to evaluate his colleagues or visit their classes for purposes of personnel evaluations. Like Mr. Carrico, Mr. Guthrie, the Nelson chairman of social studies, spent a great deal of non-paid time on department work, on developing his own teaching materials, and on professional meetings and other activities designed to help him keep up in the field.

The considerable energies of Mr. Guthrie and his colleagues in developing materials was supported by the most impressive administrative policy in any school: almost unlimited access to the school's print shop for any materials a teacher would want to develop. As a result, few teachers used adopted texts; they used text allocation funds for reproducing materials from a wide variety of educational and media sources, according to the needs and interests of their students and according to changes in the topic over time. All of the social studies teachers took advantage of this plan. Even though some courses had a text, the resulting remaining funds generated hundreds of handouts for students, most of them informative from

scholarly sources, many of them drawn from pertinent news items or excerpted from famous writers whose books in their entirety might not be understandable to students, and very few of them worksheets or busy work. Many were also the teachers' own writings.

The effect of these supports worked out in cooperation with the past administration was to stimulate teachers to participate in creating classroom knowledge. Without this teacher effort, the unified curriculum would have been very difficult to sustain because of the lack of unified texts in most subject fields. Discipline-centered texts required much supplementing to be of use and drained off funds needed to cover the texts' inadequacies. It was easier for the teachers of a given course to work together to develop a framework for the course, congruent with the goals of the rest of the department, and then to fill in that framework with materials they developed alone or in the group, than to begin with an inadequate text and work around it. The print shop budget was virtually unlimited. Both the chairman and principal told me that they did not keep records on print shop billings by department because they did not want departments competing for funds or measuring their courses by their use of the print shop. That no departmental billings were maintained seemed unbelievable, especially as budget retrenchments threatened the school during the end of the observation time. Unbelievable or not, the fact that both presented this as truth showed either a very creative use of budget powers or a strong desire to avoid any contentions over the use of the funds.

At certain key times, as will be explained in connection with a course taught jointly in the science and social studies fields, summer

money supported teacher workshops on planned innovations or program improvement. The paid weeks, usually two or four, were brief compared to summer hours without pay put in by Mr. Guthrie and many of his colleagues. This pattern had been begun under Mr. Shepherd's principalship. He was described as having been very in favor of interdisciplinary programming and highly receptive to staff suggestions. He continued to work with the teachers on long-range goals of better articulation with the junior highs and more attempts to cross even subject field lines for curriculum development, say with literature and history or math and science linkages.

Other aspects of the structure influenced the teachers' curriculum decisions. One was the lack of disproportionate administrative attention to discipline. There were discipline problems at this school almost identical to those at Maizeville and Freeburg: truancy, tardiness, rudeness, sloppy habits, occasional drugs or, more likely, drinking. The administrative personnel, chiefly the assistant principal and the guidance counselors, dealt with these students, complained about parent disinterest or unavailability and followed some of the same control strategies as those at the other schools. Several important differences emerged in the comparisons. First, the administrative attention to discipline did not noticeably intrude into teachers' time. Secondly, the administrators developed fairly consistent policies and stuck with them, not casting about for emergency relief measures under a state of siege. The overall student body was not punished because of the actions of a few. Nothing like the library doors' being locked with students inside or stern hall monitoring bore down on all students. Administrators

were cordial with students when they saw them in the halls and did not act intimidated by them. Most importantly, their concern for discipline did not overwhelm their concern for and availability to support academic concerns. Teachers were sometimes frustrated by administrative discipline decisions, but all levels of staff lay some blame for these on administrators' narrow range of alternatives given courts' and some parents' unwillingness or inability to support them in cases of repeat disrupters and truants. The numbers of students disciplined by the administration was relatively small, as was true at Maizeville where the administrative response was far more time-consuming. The teachers felt generally more supported in discipline matters and clearly more supported as professional educators trying to improve instructional quality than teachers at any other observed school. That this had been the pattern over many years under Mr. Shepherd had given teachers a long time, and these were all experienced teachers, to develop their courses, to organize coherent programs.

The teachers' union at this school resembled the bargaining organizations of the other three schools. The potential adversarial relations which the union-administration dichotomies gave rise to at the other three schools was somewhat overcome by an ad hoc committee formed to bring together people from different staff levels. Originally, according to several high seniority teachers, the union had been an agent to assure teachers professional independence and job security so that they could be free to teach under conditions conducive to their students' learning. Academic freedom and other substantive issues had been of concern. Newer union members had in

recent years shifted the bargaining focus away from working conditions and toward pay and seniority issues removed from considerations of quality instruction. As the union role narrowed, several members of the staff had the idea of setting up a new group of teachers and administrators to address these broader issues, ones not amenable to clear cut bargaining and contractual arrangements. The Concerned Coalition met at regular intervals to discuss issues of importance in the schools. In the Coalition, teachers met with administrators of various levels. Occasionally community members would be asked to present ideas. The group had no formal authority to direct policy, but freed personnel from their hierarchical roles to an extent not possible within the union contract bargaining sessions. Differences often emerged and feelings were not always congenial or productive of clear consensus, but the existence of the group over a seven or eight-year period provided a valuable forum for non-adversarial discussion.

The Coalition drafted influential but non-binding policy statements articulating the school system's philosophy, the appropriate roles and tasks for administrators and teachers within this philosophy. Willingness to work with other teachers and not claim the right to work in isolation was part of the expectations written for teachers. Teachers had to be willing to develop curriculum. Some newer teachers not on the Coalition were angry that union members would serve on a planning committee with "the enemy" and discuss planning and evaluation with administrators outside a bargaining framework. These faculty saw the forthcoming declining enrollments and wanted to protect their jobs; they feared that one consequence of the planning of the Coalition would be to introduce merit

considerations which would undercut their seniority in lay-offs. Those involved in the Coalition saw the long-range planning as essential to maintaining educational quality in the face of such economic changes. For them, involving administrators in program development was essential so that when retrenchments came, the administrators would look at programs as well as budgets when they began cutting. They were partly informed by the experience of the nearest large city, where school closings were based strictly on pupil enrollments, with programmatic concerns unaddressed until after boundary changes based on populations had been announced. The Coalition seemed one way of sustaining administrator-teacher cooperation in program areas.

The lack of disproportionate administrative concern for discipline and control was reinforced in the school by the failure to totally subordinate the learning process to the earning of credentials. The grading system included achievement grades and effort grades. The parent or student could have a better idea whether the grade reflected problems in studying and learning or in effort and attitudes toward learning. The effort grades, EG's, were averaged into the student's semester grade average along with the achievement grades. Several students who had transferred into the school thought this watered down the evaluation standards. Grade inflation could be caused by effort grades higher than achievement grades. Some of the teachers found the assigning of EG's a bother, as a way of letting students off easier. One teacher liked the EG's because they permitted him to reward students who tried but rarely had academic successes. Others felt that EG's clarified for the teacher the distance

between subjective and objective grading procedures. Since teachers often factored in effort and cooperation anyway, the teachers who favored EG's felt that these subjective considerations were made more open to the teacher and to the student by having them separated from the achievement grade.

EG's also complemented the school district's philosophy in offering an education which benefitted the whole person in offering practical skills in getting along in the world. One social studies teacher said that though the EG's presented some problems, they permitted the possibility for rewarding the student's positive contribution to the learning process. He looked at EG's this way: "I tell kids they can probably get a high school diploma from Nelson High School. They can just sit in the back of the room and not bark and . . . . Sure, I ask the kids what do we need most, more knowledge or better behavior? You know, the human race is mid-point in the 20th century [sic]. We stand back and look at where we are and where we've come from, and what do we need more of? Do we need more decent people or do we need more smart people? And you can make a good argument that we need more decency. Schools have a responsibility." A science teacher echoed this concern for having a system that rewarded students' efforts toward self-improvement: "I really believe that it is as important for a person to develop in terms of their humanity, their view of themselves and how they treat other people. And the way they view their task and their job, in this case that of being a student. That is as important as developing skills and I don't believe a person is born with those abilities. You're not born a good student and you are certainly not born with humanism. I think

you are born with a potential for humanism. And when you look at the real world and what the measures of success are, its many times, inabilities to succeed are related to inabilities to function as a human being. To get along well with others, and in attitudes towards the tasks. So I think we have to help students develop this if we expect individuals to become more effective, then we have to work at it."

The Concerned Coalition, the EG's, the availability of inexpensive printing, the presence of aides and secretaries were imaginative responses to problems common to many high schools, certainly all those in this sample. The teachers had input into all of these policies, with the possible exception of the actual budget limits on the print shop. They were participants in the formation of policy, participants in the development of a district-wide philosophy of education. In turn, the administration participated in the development of curriculum. This administrative participation was not merely indirect or unintended as at Forest Hills or antagonistic as at Freeburg. It resembled more the creation of the strong-chair model at Maizeville in its assertion of new forms to deal with institutional goals. Through hiring, resource gathering, scheduling, the administration tried to support academic goals and maintain the unified curriculum.

Science as the Unifier

Before considering the social studies department's responses to this organizational structure, we must trace the role of the science faculty in the shift from traditionally bounded subject matter courses to a unified curriculum. The chairman of science was team-teaching with the chairman of social studies during the semester of classroom

observations; he provided invaluable insights into the process by which the departments unified their curricula.

The philosophy of the school was set from the beginning. The unified curricula developed a few years later. Mr. Erickson began teaching separate fields of biology, chemistry and physics. Over time he began to be frustrated by overlap in these subjects which had no corresponding overlap in their presentation as single subjects. For some time, he began to wish for a unified science program that would overcome the artificial subject distinctions and give students a general, whole approach to the natural sciences. In casting about for a role model, the four teachers involved found only partial attempts at unification, say an eighth grade course in Ohio which taught physics one nine weeks and chemistry the second nine weeks. By the early sixties, it became apparent that if such a program were to be developed, these four teachers at this relatively new high school would have to do it.

Mr. Erickson wrote to the Ford Foundation to request funding for the teachers to work summers to develop their own curriculum. When the Ford Foundation responded that they did not support efforts in single schools, Mr. Erickson, as he tells it, asked his wife one evening what the U.S. Office of Education did. He wrote a brief letter of inquiry, addressed "to whom it may concern." By chance, it landed on the desk of a man interested in science education and in curriculum reform. After some correspondence, this man explained the process of formal proposals, budget requests, and review. After these protocols were completed, the U.S. Office of Education provided $70,000 over a four-year period for the unified science program. The

money was spent for materials development, films, a full-time secretary, production of slides, and most important summer salary for teachers to work on the curriculum. They had to develop all their own course outlines and materials, not finding any precedent for the scope of their project. The teachers worked for the weeks for each of the next four summers. During the third year of the project, they had so many materials to reproduce that the school system purchased an off-set press, setting the stage for other departments to begin producing their own materials in the years to come. The science department purchased some class sets of texts and some smaller sets for reserve in the resource center, but other "texts" became the huge lab manuals the teachers produced for the four-year science sequence. The resource center itself began because the teachers had no place in their classrooms for all the materials they were collecting and developing. As Mr. Erickson concluded, "I think it difficult to find $70,000 that the U.S. Office has invested that paid off as many dividends as this did. Because also the unified concept has grown too, now there are about 140 high schools in the U.S. that have it." Mr. Erickson's workload in answering inquiries about the program and trying to satisfy requests for sample materials was so heavy that he and some teachers in other parts of the country helped establish a center for unified science materials on a university campus.

The experience of the Nelson High science department spilled over into the other subject fields. Their curriculum development work was so productive that the administration expanded the concept of departmental aides, secretaries and resource centers to other basic subjects. When at first some departments resented the science

staff's support system, Mr. Erickson could only suggest that they too work for these supports. Eventually even those that did not initiate such innovations received them as the structure of the department became a schoolwide model. Teachers continued to work summers, sometimes with two or three weeks' salary from the district, many times without pay. One board member had been uneasy that unified curricula in all departments would dilute the academic quality; he was a professional with four children to put through college. As the older ones reported from college how well prepared they were for their course work, he became a strong advocate of the program.

The Social Studies Department

The social studies department under Mr. Guthrie's leadership was one of the earliest departments to adopt the science model of unified curricula. The teachers observed could not imagine teaching any other way. Their four-year social studies sequence followed a very rough chronology that brought together concepts and methods of inquiry from varied social studies disciplines. Ninth grade focused on world backgrounds up to 1500 A.D., including pre-industrial societies, drawing on anthropology, sociology, geography and history. The tenth grade course in western ideas covered the years 1500 to 1870, with an emphasis on the establishment of nation states and revolutions within the western world; the principal conceptual contributions were history and political science. World conflicts in contemporary history, from 1870 to the present, formed the eleventh grade course, drawing on economics, history, and political science. The senior course was contemporary issues, with the theme that "the complexities associated with the urgency for human understanding in

our contemporary world require that each individual develop himself as a thinker, individual, and citizen to the optimum of his capacity." Political science and political economy were emphasized, along with consumer economics, futurology and international relations. "The Integrated Development of Mankind," integrating economic, social, political and ethical aspects of man's life was the thread that linked the four courses. In addition to the four-year sequence, electives such as economics, and later the science and economics of energy course were available.

The richness of the four-year sequence is more remarkable in light of Freeburg's bitter fight to increase the social studies requirement from one to two credits. The principal courses observed at Nelson included a tenth grade course, because the chairman thought this teacher to be the best "asker of questions" on the staff; the science and economics of energy course because of its uniqueness and relation to the economics focus, and the senior course, under two teachers, because of its economics unit and treatment of American institutions and world problems. Each provides an example of how staff and students responded to the supportive administrative context.

Mr. Lancaster

Mr. Lancaster taught several sections of the senior course. His room resembled the office of I. F. Stone in the documentary about the later years of the publication of his Weekly: papers everywhere, in stacks, and piles, and bundles and boxes. Mr. Lancaster's curiosity knew no limits; his course content within the framework he and Mr. Guthrie had worked out over the years was constantly changing in its particulars. He continually sought new information, read

scholarly and news publications, and brought his findings into his classroom. The circle of desks around the large room was itself encircled by rows of overfilled bookshelves, posters, diagrams, interesting quotations tacked up on bulletin boards, maps and boxes of books and magazines. Inside the circle of desks, a pair of large work tables held additional magazines, course hand-outs and student papers.

Mr. Lancaster himself was involved with local history, with helping conserve a nature area and with numerous civic projects. In his late forties, he had been at the school for all but the first five years of his career. He and Mr. Guthrie shared the improbable coincidences of having studied in different years at the same college, under the same mentor professor, and worked on the same summer job together after they were both teachers. Unknown to Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Lancaster had also frequented Mr. Guthrie's business before either became teachers. The summer they worked together, Mr. Guthrie offered Mr. Lancaster a job interview, which he accepted not because he needed a job but because he had been told never to turn down an interview. He found his philosophy of teaching compatible with plans for Nelson High's department and accepted the job. Mr. Guthrie considered his hiring of Mr. Lancaster one of his best contributions to the school.

Their teaching styles were not alike; in fact, it would be difficult to imagine another teacher like Mr. Lancaster. His personal interests were so wide-ranging and his intellect so alive that he seemed not to notice that the students were not always with him. He tolerated side conversations and rude student retorts with patience

and gentle amusement while he lectured on, showed films, or directed the students toward readings he reproduced for them from his broad reading.

Mr. Lancaster's theory of teaching, as articulated in his interview and as demonstrated in his teaching, was to stretch students' minds, whether with their cooperation or against their will.

> I'm happy about what I do, and I'm enthusiastic about what I do; I know I'm dragging some of them along, kicking and screaming that don't want to do it, but that doesn't bother me. I push all the time. I enjoy what I'm doing and that's what keeps me going. . . . I can really get down about poor students and their ability to hassle me about one thing or another or give me problems, or the ones who talk. I don't think I would have been in this business since 1956 if I let those sorts of things bother me, so I can forget them overnight. Next day I'm right at it again. I can deal with those same students as if I had no problem with them the day before. I can do that.

When asked if he ever ran into a student whose curiosities matched his own, he replied yes, but that they would never let the class know it because of peer pressures. Those with a question or comments on the reading would approach him after class if a point really interested them.

Mr. Lancaster's strategy of teaching was to give students some tools for optimism. He was very well informed on world problems such as food scarcities, power inequities and energy. He believed that these problems could be solved only if people believed they could. One of his job was to show students enough ideas and give them

enough skills and acquaintance with information resources that they would see themselves as part of a solution that ultimately would come. His focus in futurology, which dealt with technology and institutions, such as the creation of new cities and drastic changes in lifestyle, was that we must not walk backwards into the future. His fear expressed over and over during that unit was that humanity would slip unknowingly into an unwanted future because of defeatist attitudes that all was inevitable. He had students read great philosophers and social theorists, whose works he excerpted for them; for personal economics he used many of the materials and models developed by Mr. Guthrie. For political awareness, Mr. Lancaster had the national news program Washington Week in Review videotaped from public television each Friday evening and shown to his classes the following Tuesday. He admitted that most students were probably resistant to this ritual at first but that over the semester each would find topics of interest or favorite commentators to follow so that their level of awareness of news analysis would be sharper when they left the class.

For involving students in information, Mr. Lancaster used an independent study project which was built on the steps preliminary to a research paper. The topic, summarized references and precis of findings would be turned in, but no extended paper would be written. Over several weeks he gave up one or two class periods per week for library work, which varied greatly in quality and efficacy among the students. His tests were like law school hypothetical exams, with extended, convoluted informational material in the question and complicated analysis or comparisons of course material required in answers. Since few students took notes, the tests were difficult to

study for, taking students by great surprise at first. The grades were often low, and the papers were slow in being returned because of the incredible work in grading them. Still, they were part of Mr. Lancaster's determination to stretch students' interests and capabilities. His renaissance mind baffled students geared more for the instrumental value of jobs and course credits, but he was convinced that despite their frequent disengagement, they left his course with more than they realized or intended to.

Mr. Hobbs

Mr. Hobbs was added to the sample because the chairman wanted me to observe a teacher who could ask questions. The class was interesting as background for the other observations since Mr. Hobbs had younger students and was instrumental in setting the expectations students would bring to upper level social studies classes. Like Mr. Lancaster, Mr. Hobbs had an active, inquiring mind and a wide range of interests. He too read widely and gathered materials for his classes from many sources. Unlike Mr. Lancaster, he was more organized and demanded more concrete involvement from his students. His course was centered on textbook assignments, with added lectures and films and considerable class discussion based on Mr. Hobbs' socratic-style questions.

Mr. Hobbs had come to the school over fifteen years before, just after the unified curriculum had been established in social studies. He felt very confortable with the arrangement:

> I can't imagine, it is just beyond me, I can't comprehend teaching people any other way than teaching all their different aspects. When you talk about teaching history, it just seems

> to me that history includes just about everything you can think of. . . . How can you teach ancient Greece without teaching political theory, how can you teach it without discussing philosophy, how can you teach Greece without studying sociology and the role of women and slavery? I mean these are all unified areas.

To engage his students in reading and in formulating some ideas of their own, he had resorted to daily worksheets to accompany the reading assignments. All of these, with their factual and analytical questions, he had developed along with the handouts that often supplemented the text. The group was taught as a whole, with everyone doing the same worksheet. To ease logistics, he wrote each class's coming three weeks' assignments on the board and walked up and down the aisles checking worksheets rather than taking them up; he wanted students to have a "map" of where the course had going and of how they stood in understanding the topics. A student teacher the year before had helped organize his huge supply of resource materials into attractive storage files which were clearly indexed and neatly stored around the room. From the many quotations and informational posters on the boards, the array of materials, the organization of assignments, students could sense that the course was going to demand something of them. The particular students observed were among the better classes Mr. Hobbs recalled in recent years for their level of participation and interest.

One of Mr. Hobbs' techniques in dealing with student writing and speaking was summarized on a colorful piece of cardboard on the bulletin board: "Don't grunt; elucidate." Rather than criticize in

great detail, Mr. Hobbs had other means of eliciting student effort:

> If they come up short, I develop little shorthand messages to give them, like 'don't grunt' and things like that. . . . I find, maybe that is what is working, you know, instead of me preaching at the kids, trying to sit down and say 'you have to do more,' I can quickly say, 'hey, that's a grunt. My kids can relate to that much better than some kind of a lecture. . . . It's a kind of light-hearted way to tell kids you can say more, you can think more, you can put thoughts together a whole lot better than you did.

He tried to be off center stage, acting as a facilitator to get students to interact with the lesson. Through each course ran complex philosophical themes which prevented the degeneration of the course into nothing but fragmented facts and worksheets. One of these themes was the nature of violence; through many periods of history, he would ask students whether the violence of that period was justified. Another was the relation of man to the state. He made the Bill of Rights central to his course on western governments and disagreed with the other teacher of the course who wanted to reduce or eliminate the time spent on these constitutional questions.

In their interviews, the students spoke of resources most beneficial to them. Some enjoyed films more; others like having a book to take home. Almost all appreciated the work and usefulness of the handouts provided by the teacher. Their most varied responses were about his questions. Several students were clearly were upset by the socratic style of questioning because they did not know how to deal with questions that did not necessarily have clear answers.

For example, after a study of the Bill of Rights, the worksheet had a question on the right of free speech. After much discussion, the class decided there should be no restrictions on free speech. Then one by one Mr. Lancaster introduced possible exceptions, such as limits on slandering other people, or perjuring oneself. The consensus dissolved, re-formed with qualifications, then dissolved again with his next question. Many students were not accustomed to having to think and found this pattern troubling. Others found it stimulating and responded with hard questions of their own. Less confident than Mr. Lancaster that his teaching was changing his students, or that he would know exactly how he would want to change them if he could, Mr. Hobbs clearly benefited from the unified curriculum in being able to mesh his own interests and expertise with the philosophy and format of the rest of the department. He and Mr. Lancaster demonstrate the variation possible within this framework, variations stemming from the teachers' individual styles and priorities. Mr. Lancaster kept the course topic-centered; Mr. Hobbs tried to balance teacher, student and materials; the junior level teachers, according to several students, centered the course on the content and work, with many days of students' working at their desks and bringing finished work to the teachers. (My own observations of these teachers fell on days they lectured or showed films, so that pattern was not evident.) Mr. Hobbs found the collegiality of the department and support of the chairman to be consonant with his own view of social studies teaching.

Mr. Guthrie

Mr. Guthrie was a man of many projects. He chaired the committee to bring closer articulation among social studies teachers at the elementary, junior and senior high levels. He was active in state-wide economics and social studies organizations, and he served on community boards in Nelson Heights. He thought of himself, in the words of Mr. Lancaster, as a great compromiser, and as a chairman who could bring the department's consensus successfully to the administration. He had built an effective department because of this administrative support, his own energies and his personal concern for his fellow teachers and their students. If his pattern of work and community involvement sound reminiscent of Mr. Carrico at Maizeville, it is partly because the two were friends and helped build social studies organizations and programs over many years. He was equally tireless but much less personally aggressive. His own philosophy of schooling was captured by his pet phrase, "practical academics." He was scholarly in his own way, but much more oriented toward practical skills for everyday living than the intellectual exercises central to Mr. Hobbs' and Mr. Lancaster's courses. His emphasis on practical academics included the best of both words, wanting students to have an educated basis for their lives as citizens and consumers. He had been a businessman before entering teaching and was accustomed to a public role and to being productive. He wanted as interesting a life, and more, for his students. For him, practical academics meant preparing students for the responsibilities they would have, for opportunities they might face and for problems inherent in a complex society.

He was well grounded in economic theory as well as microeconomics. His real speciality was in figuring out new ways to explain both facts and relationships. He had compiled a resource book for teachers on economic topics, especially cooperatives, filled with information and models for explanations. He had divided the book into distinct sections which could be used separately or together. For his courses, he worked and re-worked diagrams and charts presenting relationships, concepts, change, tables of fact. His presentations of such topics as insurance, banking, and law drew on commercial and academic sources, government agency publications and materials he personally devised.

There was no "wall" between his personal knowledge of a subject and his presentation of it in class, except where time intervened. If he felt a constraint in his teaching, it was time rather than indifferent students or a hostile administration. He based much of his economic content on his personal experience and on his expectations for the students' future. Since most of them were middle class and perhaps lower middle class, he assumed that their adult lives would follow at least a pattern of trade school, university, steady jobs and modest investments. He combined printed handouts, in abundance, with speakers from the community in his economic units. These included someone from the sheriff's office speaking on the rights of drivers and passengers in traffic, search and seizure, and liability. A real estate expert spoke on tenants' rights and responsibilities, on contracts, on real estate loans, and on calculations of interest. The assumption of the lesson, as introduced by Mr. Guthrie, was that the students would soon be living on their own and that they should

need to know defensive economic skills as well as positive planning. An insurance salesman gave a talk on beginning insurance planning early while rates are low and often locked in for many years thereafter. While the advice on whole life insurance as a major part of an investment portfolio might be open to question, the overall presentation was very practical. Another speaker talked of credit ratings.

These speakers strengthened Mr. Guthrie's ties with the community (many were parents of students) and in turn provided the speakers with free advertising for their services. Unlike the Forest Hills and Freeburg teachers who felt their low pay and adversarial relations with the administration connoted low community status and the need for low visibility, Mr. Guthrie, like Mr. Carrico actively sought ties between the community and the schools, partly to link learning to the students' interests.

After "practical academics," Mr. Guthrie's next favorite word was "synergistic." It guided his role in the department and his classroom assignments. Mr. Guthrie believed that if arranged properly, the whole could be greater than the sum of the parts. Working together the faculty could build a far richer curriculum than would result from the total of the individual efforts of those same teachers. In the classroom, this translated into group projects and discussions. Especially in the science and economics of energy course, students were encouraged to work together, even at the risk of some not working at all. He felt that if the weaker students worked along with the stronger ones, they would learn more than by working alone; he and Mr. Erickson reserved the right to divide grades unequally if they

saw differential effort. He felt that many educational innovations had failed because they had been fragmented, reforms of small pieces of schools rather than general "overhauls," as he advocated. When the innovations fail, he said, people blame the schools. "We need synergistic structures in schools for programming to succeed. We're unified within departments, but need more than that. One reason students have problems in school is that they can't see relationships." He chaired the committee to strengthen linkages among elementary and secondary schools, and he sought ways of linking social studeies to English and other departments now that the science and social studies cooperative effort on energy had proven to be such a success.

The stack of handouts from Mr. Guthrie's senior contemporary issues course and notes from his lectures was almost a foot tall. Each unit was first presented as a complete packet of handouts and activities, with additions coming as the topic progressed. Most of the readings were included in the printed handouts rather than as books. Some handouts were designed for future filing, such as insurance and mortgage schedules, sample contracts, tax information forms and the like. If there was a problem with the course, it was that students' jobs were rarely brought into the discussion, even when installment contracts, consumer rights, and employment laws were being discussed. In order to do everything in the limited time, Mr. Guthrie left little to the students in the way of adding information.

Mr. Guthrie had been known in the region as a strong economics teacher and a standard bearer for improved economics information.

When the Maizeville teachers, who were trying to add economics to their list of required courses, heard that Mr. Guthrie had given up his economics course to team teach a course on the science and economics of energy, they quizzed me on "Why on earth would he do that, Guthrie of all people?" The answer lay in his concern, shared with Mr. Erickson, that the public was woefully unaware of energy issues even as major policy questions demanded citizen literacy on the subject.

Mr. Erickson provided the history of the course. Several years before, Mr. Erickson had begun to share with Mr. Guthrie his concern that when dealt with in science courses, even as an extended unit, energy could not be understood since its use and sources are so dependent on political and social factors beyond the expertise of most scientists and science education materials. Mr. Guthrie expressed a similar frustration in dealing with the issue from a political and economic standpoint with students who had little factual knowledge about energy sources and uses. Over a couple of years, they talked of setting up a joint course to provide a more sensible approach. They worked over a summer roughing out an outline for their separate areas, then individually filling in their share of the information. They produced a lab-type text similar to the other science course manuals, with most readings and homework exercises, tables and charts, bound into the manual. As with the unified science, the absence of a text designed to address their course goals dictated creating their own books.

In the beginning, the course was a one-semester course for high-achieving science and social studies students. Their concern that all

citizens be informed on energy issues led them to restructure the course in a way that could give average and even low-achieving students some success. In addition to this shift, the course underwent revisions each year, even each semester, though new editions of the manual were produced only annually. Constant updating and revision kept the course up with current changes in energy research and policy; the teachers were never satisfied with the manual and had fun trying to figure out new explanatory models, gather latest energy figures and develop contacts with new sources of information.

The course began with preliminary explanations of economics concepts and with fundamentals on the nature of energy and energy resources. Each teacher taught his own area. Then the course proceeded to the economics of energy, in production and consumption. Energy alternatives were introduced, then energy was linked to quality of life. These units led to the culmination synergistic activity: students were to work in groups arriving at a formula for the energy use growth rate for the next 20, 50 and 100 year periods. Based on this growth rate, the students were to work through complicated formulas to determine energy resources needed and their expected availability. Any short-falls were to require suggested alternatives.

The two-hundred-page manual began with a satire on gas consumption by Art Buchwald, but quickly moved into intimidating diagrams and mathematical formulas. One weakness of the course was that in their desire to have students understand the mathematics of doubling times, known and discoverable reserves of non-renewable sources and possible production from renewable energy resources, the teachers

left little time for examination of policy issues, political constituencies behind policy, or the shape of debate on the issues. The strength of the course was that many important concepts were included, from cost-push inflation and elasticity, to the transformation efficiencies of various fuels. The manual was the student's to keep as a valuable reference; several graduates had written to praise its helpfulness in their college courses.

Several student questions went unanswered in the big lecture hall format. One was nuclear power. Many students and parents had strong reservations about the safety of nuclear power. The teachers said they were not pro-nuclear, but that nuclear power was essential as a bridge between the old patterns of dependence on fossil fuels and the yet-to-be-developed renewable sources of the future. They took the students through many calculations of the inadequacy of conservation and renewables to sustain "our way of life." They took students to tour a coal-fired electrical plant and investigated this alternative source of electricity, but came down favoring nuclear power in an interim. When some parents complained (before I observed at this school) that the teachers invited in speakers who represented only the pro-nuclear power position of the region's electric utilities, the teachers responded by inviting the local anti-nuclear congressman. He was unable to keep his commitment. The teachers had the strong opinion that pro-nuclear speakers were speaking from facts, and that anti-nuclear speakers were speaking from emotions. They did not want emotions to enter into the discussion. They genuinely felt themselves to be open on the subject, but this one point hurt their credibility for some of the students interviewed, who volunteered this uneasiness.

Along with the question of nuclear power was the prior question of quality of life. The teachers based their projections of energy use on maintaining the same "quality of life." They would state that the figures hold true "unless we are to drastically change our life-style." This question remained begged and called for closer examination so that its abstractness might be made clearer to the students as their groups formed their end-of-year energy policy statements. Aside from these two student concerns, the course was considered very difficult but valuable. The year prior to the observations, the students had mailed their energy policy statements to their congressmen and heard back from congressional staffs for sharing their concerns. Once students managed to conquer, alone or synergistically, the imposing mathematical exercises, they praised the comprehensiveness of the course. It definitely fulfilled Mr. Guthrie's desire for practical academics.

Problems at Nelson High

In comparison with the other high schools, it would seem that the Nelson teachers had and contributed to a very positive learning/teaching environment. The adversarial component between teachers and administrators had not been a part of the school's history. On slim budgets, the school system had provided excellent materials and a workable building. Even though the starting and ending pay range at Nelson was slightly lower than in the nearest city schools, these teachers chose to work there because of its compatible philosophy. Several problems did come to light either as weaknesses in the present structure, or as future vulnerabilities.

The first is that although the administrative structure generated much teacher effort, it had no means of discerning the impact of the curricula on students. This characteristic it shared with the other schools, though in lesser degree than Maizeville because of the greater concern of administrators for content and less than Forest Hills, where sheer size of the school prevented much contact between administrators and students except in discipline matters. Despite their concern for students' practical learning, attention to instructional form, and thus student requirements and responses, was slighted by their planning. Part of this was due to the feeling within the department that all teaching styles are different; certainly, Mr. Hobbs would never have used Mr. Lancaster's tests, nor would Mr. Lancaster have used worksheets. More was required of students at Nelson than at the other schools, but there was no systematic attention to whether the needs of particular students rather than students in general were being met. Students voiced this concern in interviews. Most of the teachers felt that the upper-ability students would find enough substance in the open-ended topics of the course to pursue them if interested; the teachers admitted that few students did. The weaker students were also potential losers in courses that taught everyone together. Mr. Erickson's descriptions of the A and B groupings in science, with small group and tutorial work planned into both and immediate feed back on projects, made that plan sound like the only program in the school designed to deal with the impact of instruction on students of various abilities. Many of the teachers were so enthusiastic about their courses, that they focused on covering material with speed and thoroughness; this centralized information

into the hands of the teacher in some of the ways that had occurred at Forest Hills. The difference was that Nelson High teachers had no "walls" between their personal and classroom knowledge, nor did they want the students to have any or to keep absolutely silent.

A second problem was the number of students working more than 20-30 hours per week.[1] The Distributive Education Club of America had been established to provide work experience for those students not expected to go to college. Many students now used the program who planned to go to college, but wanted to use their elective credits to leave the building and work. The new principal, having a vocational education background, found this a positive development. He approved of the work habits learned, the chance to experiment in different jobs, and the enhanced public relations in the community provided by hard-working students. One administrator voiced the sentiment found at Freeburg and Maizeville among administrators, that jobs kept many students out of the halls and parking lots of the school and reduced supervision needs. The classroom teachers saw the matter differently. They saw students too sleepy to listen to lectures after working into the night cutting cheese or bussing tables at restaurants. They saw students with little free time to read assignments, do extended projects or get together with other students as needed in the energy course project. They felt that students' and parents' priorities were inappropriate when students worked not to help support families or save for college but buy stereos and cars and entertainment. These teachers had not reduced their assignments as much as teachers at the other schools, but they did feel hindered

by the fact that many of these working students saw school as a place to rest until time for work.

A problem looming for the future was declining enrollments. Nelson Heights and Blackhawk were surrounded by the river and other townships. New housing development through urban sprawl would not be forthcoming to alleviate the declining school enrollments. Families who had settled in the area twenty and thirty years before now had "empty nests." The school district was committed to maintaining buildings, programs and as much staff as possible in anticipation of increasing enrollments as older people sold their property to younger families over the next two decades. In the interim, hard choices would have to be made. The problem was underscored by a very energetic senior girl who had moved to Nelson Heights two years before. Her parents had been advised to buy a house in the area in order to have their children attend the schools. They had to stay in their former city for an extra year until a house fitting their needs could be found.

The declining enrollments posed several threats to the faculty. First, they introduced new uncertainties into a climate already unsettled by recent changes in the principalship and superintendency. The old superintendent had helped set up the school and knew its philosophy well; the new one was an unknown quantity, with a good reputation but rumored political ambitions. They feared his bottom line would be numbers and budgets rather than quality programs. The new principal had been committed to supporting the unified curricula but would be working with smaller and smaller budgets and so could not be expected to do everything the former principal had done.

Neither man was feared, but the expectation that soon enrollments would drop beyond the point where natural staff attrition would take care of faculty reductions made teachers apprehensive and edgy.

The apprehension was especially understandable given the high levels of seniority among all the teachers. Most of the social studies teachers had been hired fifteen to twenty years before. None were near retirement age. After the few part-time teachers and the aide were let go, the only ones left would be teachers whose entire teaching careers had been built around the school, including unpaid summers. These teachers had accepted lower beginning salaries in order to participate in a program they could affirm, only to find that at the time they should have been able to see financial rewards for their long years of service, they faced lay-offs in an era tight markets for teachers nationwide. When rumors that merit would in some way determine lay-offs, one teacher wrote the board asking to know in advance what criteria would be used so he could know. It is unlikely that at that time the administration had completely worked out those criteria and their relation to the union contracts and staffing needs.

Even with these present and future problems, Nelson High was a good place to teach and a good place to be a student. What was most interesting was the staff dissatisfaction with their courses. The first day I walked into Mr. Guthrie's office to learn about the program, Mr. Lancaster stuck his head into the door to say he wished they dealt with more international issues. Mr. Hobbs spoke of wanting to develop a biographical history course, based on the lives of heroes and villains, philosophers and statesmen and others whose ideas had affected history. He too would like a course on international relations and

comparative political systems. Mr. Guthrie was dissatisfied that plans to publish his extensive work on economics had so far been thwarted by bureaucratic procedures in the agency that helped underwrite the work; he was also always dissatisfied with the energy course, wanting to expand it from one to two semesters so that more explanation could be devoted to topics already included and more economics topics could be added. He and Mr. Lancaster were never satisfied with their contemporary issues courses, always looking for new materials and always designing new models of explanation. When not combined with problems of salaries outstripped by inflation and by threats of layoffs, these frustrations kept the program vibrant and relevant. When seen in conjunction with these job survival issues, they pointed to some reducing of expectations about their careers and worth to their students.

The staff had dealt with large problems before, chiefly the creation from scratch of a set of impressive unified curricula out of slim resources and good intentions. It remains to be seen whether the new problems, which introduce tensions with students (and their jobs) and with administrators (over cutbacks) can be so creatively resolved. The school demonstrates so far the potential for structural mechanisms to overcome the tendencies of minimal effort on the part of staff when the commitment to the educative function of the school supercedes the goals of order.

NOTES ON PART II

INTRODUCTION

[1]For a further discussion of the de-skilling of teachers, see Chapter 5, "Curriculum Form and the Logic of Technical Control: Commodification Returns," in Apple (1982).

CHAPTER 4

[1]McNeil (1977, 1981).

[2]See especially "Negotiting Classroom Knowledge," McNeil (1981).

[3]To cite this dissertation would be to reveal the identity of the school.

CHAPTER 5

[1]An analysis of the numbers of students working and their perceptions of the pressures their jobs place on schoolwork is the subject of research in progress, "Lowering Expectations: the Effects of Student Employment on Curriculum," by Linda McNeil, funded by a grant from the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison, forthcoming.

[2]This survey circulated by the State Department of Public Instruction was found in "Bulletin on Graduation Requirements" and was dated September, 1977.

[3]Educational specialist thesis written by a teacher at Freeburg in 1980-81; the citation in full would divulge the identity of the teacher and school.

CHAPTER 6

[1]Student employment patterns and their effects on curriculum and students' school participation at Maizeville are a part of the survey cited in Note 1, Chapter 5, above.

CHAPTER 7

[1]The students of Nelson High were included in the survey of student employmented cited in Note 1, Chapter 5, above.

PART III

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 8

LOCUS OF AUTHORITY

In Organization Without Authority, Ann Swidler (1979) presents the case of an alternative school with very few rules, very few formal authority structures. A "free school," the school is chosen by teachers and students who wish to avoid the artificial barriers to learning posed by rigid institutional formalities such as course credits or attendance requirements. As described by Swidler, the authority for the actions of the staff--their methods of teaching and their expectations for student responses, had to be created by the teacher. A teacher by personality, charisma or command of subject matter had to generate student interest, maintain student interest, and justify student involvement in the course. Such justifications were not provided by a list of required courses or by grades for student achievement.

In the schools observed for this study, teachers worked within a framework of many rules and formalities. Yet they often had to create their own authority to pursue their educational goals even within a context of formal designations of course titles, course sequences and evaluation procedures. To better understand how teachers did or did not choose to create their own authority, and in what context it became necessary, one must look to the authority patterns within the school.

Clearly, many school practices result from the school's role in the larger society, especially in the economy. Other practices

seem to arise within the institution quite apart from their logic in relating to the rest of the society. This is due in part to the fact that schools represent an accretion of habits, practices, traditions, and goals which have come into schooling over an almost two-hundred year period and from sources which are often mutually-contradictory. Over time, social pressures differentially reinforce aspects of these borrowings, as when accountability pressures reverted to the legacy of standardized testing for their translation into practice. Sputnik turned schools into national security issues, reminiscent of the Americanization efforts by schools to reduce incipient radicalism by socializing East European immigrants. The multiplicity of concurrent and contradictory practices and rationale shift in relative power as they find justification within the interests dominant at any one time.

Given these shifts in the authority for school practices, it is essential to ask how questions of authority shape the behavior of students, teachers and administrators, especially since the official authority relations between them is hierarchical, as enforced by contract and by law. Some of the sources of authority for participants' actions derive from institutional considerations; others, from outside the school. Sometimes the authority source is shared by all participants; in other matters, one group of participants has a logic unintelligible to the others.

Teaching and Legitimacy

After observing in a number of teachers' classes, one may ask where the legitimacy for the teaching functions comes from.

Technically, the authority for management of teachers and instruction lies with administrators. As seen by these case studies, administrators do not always exercise this formal authority. As in free school described by Swidler, the teacher in this case has to derive decisions about content and instruction from other sources. This informal creation of authority may be better looked at as a legitimating function. In the absence of imposed choices, the teachers had to find a basis for their decisions.

Teachers rarely quarrel when administrators fail to exercise authority over curriculum because of the tradition of academic freedom they wish to preserve and because of their self-perception as professionals with autonomy over a certain domain, in this case the classroom. Only when the teaching authority is undermined by administrative prerogatives not related to instruction (as in the failure of the Freeburg administration to insure teachers had enough books for their students; or the imposition of new order-keeping duties without adequate bargaining), do teachers seem to acknowledge an administrative role in instruction. This is especially true in traditional schools where the administration is very loosely coupled to the classroom processes. When conflict arises between the authority of the teacher and the authority of the administrator, where does the legitimacy of the teachers' responses have its basis? The teachers in these schools justified some of their decisions on student characteristics and responses, some on their personal models of teaching, and some on internal policies of the school. A few blamed their teaching, or credited it, to non-school causes.

Teachers rarely referred to their union contract except in relation to pay or monitoring duties. Within the classroom, the contract was not an issue; it set minimum standards for job performance (attendance, for example) and was understood to relate to minimal expectations. Even those teachers in the departments observed or in other departments who appeared to work close to the minimum standards did not use the contract as a justification. In considering the social control functions of their jobs, teachers did cite bargained compromises as the basis for their willingness or unwillingness to comply.

At the upper level of performance, most teachers cited an ideal role, an ideal teacher model as the basis for their highest expectations of teaching. With no salary differentials for merit, and few institutional rewards except within the supportive structure at Nelson High, teachers tended not to base their ideal of teaching on an external factor. This does not mean that they continued to be socialized by the stereotype of a teacher as a willingly starving public servant. It does mean that teachers had few expectations that the institution in any way monitored or rewarded great effort in teaching. When asked what kept him going, Mr. Erickson at Nelson failed to understand the question. When it was repeated, he looked very quizzical and replied, "What keeps me going is that I constantly have on the horizon goals that I haven't even started towards." Hardly taking a breath, he outlined a multi-mode approach to teaching science in a way that structured experiences that made the students

responsible for their own learning. He could "hardly wait to get at them." At the same school, Mr. Hobbs legitimated his style of teaching, the asking of questions, by his own curiosity and desire for answers. Mr. Carrico, the strong-chair/coordinator at Maizeville, justified his long hours and entrepreneurial efforts within the school and outside it by his desire to be really good "or get out."

The Forest Hills teachers justified their choices of teaching methods and curriculum by the need to maintain authority over content in the face of student protests (in the past, but always possible again if students come across unsettling information about American government). They further justified their instructional methods and testing forms by the need to create their own efficiencies in an institution which had seen those efficiencies taken away with the demise of ability-group tracking and boundary shifts.

Several teachers derived their legitimacy from their expertise in the subject matter. Mr. Seager at Maizeville and Mr. Lennon at Freeburg were master story-tellers; they loved politics, economics and history and derived from these interests in their subjects their continued role in an institution in which they felt some alienation. This is also largely true of Mr. Reznick at the same school, although he also had the added function of taking charge of the department. He and Mr. Carrico both overcame institutional dissonance by assuming leadership roles, though at Freeburg that role was far more limited than at Maizeville.

The strong chairman/coordinator role added legitimacy to great effort by channeling that effort for the benefit of the whole

department as well as the chairman's own clsses. At Nelson High, the unified curricula and support for collegial interaction provided not only the justification for working together, but the mandate for collective enterprises.

When the legitimacy for the teaching role did not arise at the institutional level, teachers turned to their personal resources or to perceptions of their students. They expressed concern for student ability levels as limitations on their ability to teach. Gathering information and evaluating it was largely seen as being possible only with upper-ability students. Both Miss Langer at Forest Hills and Mr. Hobbs at Nelson spoke of students as unable to formulate questions, much less go to the library to look for answers. Students' families also gave teachers an expressed reason for many of their actions. Minimal teacher efforts were blamed on families that did not care; lack of attention to the most capable students was justified by the thought that "they will get it on their own; their families care about them." As will be discussed at great length in Chapter 9, teachers also justified their classroom practices by their anticipations of student compliance. Many taught "defensively," apologizing for assignments or reducing requirements in order to elicit minimum student cooperation. One basis for teachers' defensive strategies was their sense of having to compete with students' jobs for the students' time and energies. Especially where teachers resented students' extra spending power relative to their own, or where teachers saw students' willingness to do assignments undercut

by long job hours, they responded by reducing both the assignments and their own efforts at teaching.

Lortie has noted (1975) that for men in public school teaching positions, the authority for their role derives more from their lives outside school than within. Men who are not coaches or administrators within the school are more secure in their roles if they have community standing other than their teaching jobs. Mr. Carrico (at Maizeville), Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Lancaster (at Nelson) served on community boards, took positions of leadership in professional organizations, and led very visible lives outside school. It would seem in the case of these three men that their confidence as teachers and their willingness to open to students their personal knowledge and a wide assortment of resources did not derive from these community roles; rather, they chose the community goals for the same reasons of intellectual liveliness and public service that motivated their teaching. In the case of Mr. Schmidt, who lectured from an overhead projector each day, his high standing as a coach of a sport did reflect back onto his teaching and prevent parent complaints from affecting his reputation or practices. Two of the teachers who were frequently unable to engage students in the learning process, and who taught defensively, also had very active and popular roles in their communities, so this Lortie analysis does not always hold true. However, it does point to the fact that personal as well as institutional factors shape teacher practice.

Although several administrators said that a verbal thank you was all most teachers needed, or administrators could give, as a

reward for conscientious teaching, they should not be surprised in the present economic situation to find teachers justifying their level of efforts by their level of pay. Several felt they had given "beyond the call" too long; others had to work evenings and weekends at other jobs if they were the sole wage earner for the family. Remunerative considerations did in fact constrain several teachers.

As will be discussed in Chapter 9, when teachers justify their own minimum standards by the social control emphasis of the administrative context, they may unwittingly be participating in their own de-skilling. That is, they may be reinforcing a pattern of disengagement themselves disengaging from the forms of classroom interaction. This can be avoided by such structural arrangements as the strong-chair or collegial, unified department models which delegate certain curriculum oversight powers from administrators to teachers or which link teacher and administrative concerns in programmatic action. At Nelson these links were further forged by the efforts of the Concerned Coalition in bolstering current programs and making long-range plans for the future. Such initiatives forestall the de-skilling that may inadvertently accompany some forms of resistance to an adversarial administrative context.

Legitimating Administrative Practice

Administrators more than other school personnel must first justify their practices by the bureaucratic standards and procedures within which they were hired. Whereas the language of teachers varies by subject matter and age of students, the language of administrators is rooted in technological control. Following their

origins in social efficiency, administrators speak of the products of their schools, of measurement, of budgets, of planning and systems. The technological rationale is so pervasive that only with great effort may administrators avoid its intrusions into the educative functions of schooling. Training as an administrator is socialization into this mode.

From the observations and interviews with principals and assistant principals, the dominance of a technological mode for school practices seems unworkable. Little that administrators do is precise, rationalized, productive of technical outcomes (see Wolcott, 1972). The inappropriateness of this mode for the haphazard process of schooling is one source of the antagonism between teachers and these administrators who have appropriated this language for discussing school policy.

The bureaucratic context can set management objectives, as at Forest Hills, or regulate administrators' treatment of students. Administrators also feel constrained by the law, especially the unwillingness of juvenile courts to support efforts to combat truancy. Legal limits on students' rights, especially in areas of discipline, legitimate certain administrative responses, such as general rules which attempt to regulate the entire student body (as at Freeburg) rather than those students causing problems.

Administrators also justify their policies by their perceptions of students and their families. They use single-parent families and commuter parents as a reason for their own powerlessness to deal with discipline problems. For their obligations to varied student populations,

they differed in whether they thought students with learning problems should be taught by "experts" (as at Forest Hills) or dealt with by the teacher (the principal at Maizeville). For high-achieving students, the consensus seemed to be that "they will get it on their own." This was said at every school by at least one staff person.

While the powers of the principals technically derived from the school board and bureaucratic structure, they more than teachers based some of their practices on political considerations, public relations, and their personal social role in the community. This was especially true at Forest Hills, where the administrators and teachers were socially and economically distant.

The social control goals themselves reinforced certain administrative practices. Pride in a smooth-running school reinforced justifications for constant attention to controlling student behavior. Success in credentialing, perhaps in the ratios of graduates to drop-outs, or in the numbers of students going on to college, reinforced this role as well.

Only at one school did the reputation of the administrator have a basis on the quality of instruction of the school. Administrators seemed more distant than teachers to the reputation of instruction at the school unless they chose to make this their domain, as at Nelson High.

In summary, administrators tended to legitimate their attention to social control goals by their perceptions of pressures from outside the school, including the courts and family life; but they also derived legitimacy for their priorities from internal aspects of

the school, including their role in the bureaucratic framework, their perceptions of potential student behavior, and their perceptions of teacher effort and quality. Their attention to educative functions tended to lie in personal concerns rather than institutionally or politically mandated directives.

Student Responses

In the "old days," Miss Langer recalled that students had high academic standards, shared teachers' concern for learning, and worked for high grades. This perception was shared at several schools. All of them described their present students as less interested in the reward structures within schools and more grounded in their non-school lives. This is a critical source of distance between teachers and students. Teachers have rarely presumed to understand youth culture. But they did feel at these schools that at one time, teachers and students derived some of their institutional satisfaction from the same factors, student projects and activities, student involvement in classwork, and student achievement. In the classes observed, only a few students said they worked for specific grades. Of these, only a few needed grades of a certain level for admission to the preferred college. Personal pride was more a motivating factor, or family pressure, than the currency the grades would bring in scholarships or college admissions.

The state university system is generally high in quality and low in cost. Admissions standards are not highly restricted for those graduating from high school within the state. Because the quality of these schools and the trade schools is reputed to be high,

students in this state are not compelled to excel in order to be admitted to an out-of-state or private college. Grades, then, have personal, but little instrumental, value above the passing mark.

When school credentials guaranteed a certain level of job, the school could perhaps more legitimately claim a student's full participation in anticipation of those useful credentials. With credential inflation and economic retrenchment, many students were aware that the high school diploma was necessary but not sufficient for a job after high school. In addition, in towns such as Maizeville and Freeburg, several students answered questions about their future careers by saying they (or their families) wanted them in the trades rather than in academic or other white-collar jobs because of better pay in the trades. These students were marking time until they graduated. Many cited their employers as people they would consult for explanations regarding economic or political news. Several mentioned information learned at their jobs as more credible than teachers' or textbooks' descriptions.

Students seemed to derive from their jobs the personal satisfaction not found in school work. Many spoke of having to work harder at jobs than at school, at enjoying being responsible for matters rather than being always told what to do and when to have a hall pass. Most found more satisfaction from their earnings and consumption patterns than from the substance of the job; few related job choices to personal interests or future career plans. It is interesting to note that the distance between personal interests and jobs was engendered less disengagement than similar distances from

school practices. This seemed to be because of both the greater responsibility demanded by the job and by the instrumental value of the job in providing spending money. Few students saved for college, and thus drew teacher encouragement for their employment. Because teachers had withdrawn assignments, or reduced them, in response to widespread student employment, students expressed little conflict between job and school demands on their time except at exam periods. Jobs helped privatize students' responses by fragmenting peer groups that otherwise might have "hung around" together. Most worked in places not conducive to building collective worker responses, that is, washing dishes, working for small offices, babysitting, yard work, cooking or serving at restaurants, or selling in stores.

Neither the school content nor the school credentials were as important to many students as their jobs and earnings. Whereas students were clients and passive recipients in school, they were more likely to be active producers at work; even if they did not value the substance of their work, they did value its rewards. Their role as consumer, especially as consumer of major purchases, gave them adult standing in the market and greater status among peers. Although an observer might see high school students as manipulated by advertising fads and mass media, they claimed this culture for their own and did not feel as controlled by it as by school culture. Also, their jobs, perhaps because of the newness or lack of worker consciousness, seemed less like de-skilling (my word, not theirs0 than their passive role and rote participation in classrooms.

Authority and Adversaries

It is clear that each group of participants in the high school had for their behavior within the institution sources of legitimacy different from those of the other participants. At each level, attention to control goals or minimum standards from the adjacent "level" of participants caused disengagement from the processes that linked the two groups. While teachers had probably been motivated by achievement and perhaps conformity (except for Mr. Lennon) as students, their own students looked outside the school for justifications for their in-school behaviors. Collective peer resistance was less evident among these middle-class students than hidden, silent resistance expressed in interviews and exhibited in the exertion of only minimal participation.

Credential inflation and a retrenching economy, along with the past two decades' history of student questionning of school legitimacy had their manifestation in students' reluctant participation. For administrators, the removal of many coercive powers had removed that source of authority over student behavior as well. Few of the administrators had a vision of what a productive student-teacher exchange would be. Only at Maizeville and Nelson was this failure of administrative imagination overcome by structural rather than merely personal influences. Otherwise, the more minimum standards at one level were rewarded, the more they engendered minimum participation by the other levels. Where legitimacy for goals or practices was not shared, the minimum standards reflected an adversarial relation characterized by efforts of resistance. When students disengaged from school practices (which in most of these schools took the form

of truancy, laziness or mild disruption at worst), administrators responded with controls aimed at students in general rather than students in particular. As we have seen, at Nelson this intruded directly into teacher time and caused teacher resistance as well. As teachers responded to control impositions, whose legitimacy they did not affirm, they fell into trivializing course content or activities in order to preserve some control over their own domain.

This cycle of adversarial relations was seen at all the schools in some degree. It was alleviated at all the schools in some form. But only in those schools where a shared source of legitimacy for school practices crossed personnel lines and found institutionalization in school structure were patterns of disengagement and minimal participation avoided with some consistence rather than alleviated. And only in these schools was the teaching-learning process sustained without the taking on of personal risks by committed individuals in the administration. The common basis for the unified curriculum at Nelson did not solve all the school's pedagogical and social control problems. It did, however, provide a basis for overcoming the cycle of lowered expectations brought about by potentially adversarial relations. Where such structures did not mediate the tension between goals or order and control, individuals at each level had to create their own methods of resolving this tension.

CHAPTER 9

DEFENSIVE TEACHING AND CLASSROOM CONTROL

Children's biographies of Louis Braille provide a telling example of the nature of authority in schools. When Braille was first told that a school existed for blind boys, he was determined to attend so that the could learn to "read" its entire library of books. When he arrived, he found that there were only three books in the library. Each book had been transcribed into huge embossed letters which the boys had to trace, one letter at a time, until the entire book was read. Embossing the letters was costly and time-consuming; reading them was so ponderous a task that maintaining the sense of a paragraph was problematic over the period of time taken to decipher it. During his years at the Institute, Braille became determined to develop a new system for reading whole words and reading them faster. When he finally came upon a stylus system of punching coded dots, he not only found a method adaptable to "reading" quickly and with only one hand, he also found a way for the blind themselves to communicate. With a stylus and flat surface, they could "write" their own messages, no longer dependent on others for their communication.

Louis Braille was not immediately hailed a hero. Although the students were enthusiastic about his method and learned it quickly, the masters of the school forbade its use. Their old habits died hard; learning a new system would be difficult. And more important, under the old system of embossed letters, they were

in control of communication; they chose the books to be embossed, the timing of permission to read the books, and the opportunities for oral communication for the students. With written, or stylus-punched communications, the blind students' voices would no longer be the limit of their communication. Many years passed before Braille's method was adopted.

The source of legitimacy for the forms of knowledge at that institute was the masters' desire for continued power to determine "learning." Knowledge control was not anti-intellectual so much as it was a form of social control.

Many of the decisions of knowledge access or control at the high schools observed were rooted less in theories of knowledge or theories of child development or learning than in attempts to maintain order within the teachers' domain, the classroom. In a separate paper, submitted as Appendix A of this report, "Defensive Teaching and Classroom Control,"[1] the relationship between knowledge control and classroom control is discussed in great detail. A summary of that paper will be the subject of this chapter.

In the old days of the one-room school house, or so our culture remembers, or the Latin grammar school master, the teacher wielded a hickory stick in order to make students learn. Student discipline was instrumental to mastering the content. This study of four Wisconsin high schools indicates that often teachers reverse those ends and means. They maintain discipline by the ways they present course content. They choose to simplify content and reduce demands on students in return for classroom order and minimal student

compliance on assignments. Feeling less authority than their Latin-grammar school counterparts, they teach "defensively," choosing methods of presentation and evaluation which they hope will make their workload more efficient and create as little student resistance as possible. These findings are important because they demonstrate some of the specific dynamics which lie behind the much-publicized lowered expectations students and teachers are bringing to the classroom. In addition, they are significant because the teachers who teach defensively do not fit any one ideological or demographic category, nor do their students, and they use these techniques of classroom control with students of all ability levels and perceived "differences."

As mentioned in descriptions of the individual schools, this pattern of knowledge control was not anticipated in the research design prior to the first school case study. It was discovered in taped interviews in which teachers explained their reasons for their choices of instructional methods and content. In the absence of authority conferred and supported by the administration for their educational goals, the teachers of Forest Hills developed ways to create their own efficiencies and maintain their own authority over content. Using the same or different words, many of the teachers at the other schools used the same rationale. Their curriculum choices had to fulfill two goals: to give the students information about American history and economics, and at the same time, they had to establish firm limits as to the efficiency of the presentation. Most of the teachers resolved this tension by maintaining tight

control over course content, eliminating almost all student reading assignments, written work or discussion. As the primary, or sole, source of information, the teachers could adapt knowledge forms to their efficiencies and knowledge content to information they could supply and control. Several techniques were used within the lecture format to achieve these ends:

Fragmentation

The simplest lecture technique among social studies teachers is the reduction of any topic to fragments, or disjointed pieces of information. Lists. A list keeps the teacher from having to elaborate, keeps a student from having to express "learnings" in complete sentences or paragraphs or show that he or she understands relationships among pieces of information. Lists give the appearance of conveying a great deal of information in a brief time period and present students with a degree of certainty about the forms of evaluation to be expected. Lists can reduce conflict by reducing issues to "facts," as though historians had reached a consensus about a historical event. Lists provided "content" without context, as when the "tools" of labor unions were written on the board for memorizing, without discussion of the labor conditions giving rise to forms of resistance.

Because they appeared to add certainty to learning expectations, students complained less about lists and fragmentation than other forms of course content. The chief vulnerability of this form, however, lay in students' suspicions about the validity of fragmented information when they encountered non-school information which

contradicted the lists. Having little or no context within which to judge information from either source, the students often found the school-supplied information to be suspect. (Examples are included in the extended paper.) The irony of this technique of conveying information is that it created so much distance between the student and the content that it caused a backlash of the kind of cynicism the teachers were trying to avoid.

Mystification

I have termed another treatment of information mystification. Teachers often tried to surround a controversial or complex topic with mystery in order to close off discussion of it. When the teachers mystified a topic, they made it appear very important but unknowable. When they mentioned the Federal Reserve or the gold standard or the International Monetary Fund, they asked students to copy the term into their notes. Then a comment would follow to the effect that students should know about this and remember the term for the next tests, but that non-experts really could not go into depth on this subject. Sometimes this seemed to be a ruse for hiding the teacher's lack of knowledge on a subject. At other times, the intent seemed to be to have students internalize the affective component of the term so that their trust of the economic system would be enhanced. This attention to affiliative language best conforms to Bourdieu's (1977) concept of creating "habitus" rather than mechanistic reproduction of dominant cultural values. Certainly this was the intent of the Forest Hills teachers. One told me "you have to sell the system." Another emphasized that students should

appreciate our institutions, especially those created during the New Deal.

The effect of mystification was that often students did internalize the emotional quality of the term, such as capitalism or free enterprise, though remaining unable to explain it. But mystification created unease among those students who felt they still had little personal understanding of these common phrases. Another effect of mystification was that it helped engender a client mentality: since students were not invited to pursue information on their own, they developed a feeling of dependence on externally-supplied information. Frequently when asked what they thought they should learn about a certain topic, their answer shifted to the third person: "they should tell us," or "pollution must not be a problem, because they don't mention it anymore" (emphasis added).

Omission

The lecture strategy which produced the most backlash of suspicion, and the only resistance to be voiced in class, was omission. The students were less concerned about specific topics omitted than about whole time periods omitted from lectures, especially recent years in the contemporary U.S. history courses.

The teachers who used this strategy felt that history was a "story" about which historians agreed. To deal with current topics would prevent the presentation by the teacher of this consensus. To the teachers, who were well into middle-age, "current" meant anything which happened in their adulthood, say from Eisenhower or Kennedy to the present. Even when current economic turmoils such as New York

City's impending bankruptcy or unemployment in certain sectors equal to that of the Depression, which was being studied, --even when these topics related to course content, they were omitted in favor of coverage of the topics using outlines or transparencies prepared semesters or years before.

Omissions also were a way of dealing with controversy or with topics which would have demanded extended treatment, perhaps several varied attempts at explanation.

Removing complex topics which could not be dealt with in lists or brief descriptions, or which raised issues, helped maintain teacher authority over the content as well as efficiency in covering material. One teacher said that he had cut out research papaers because the weaker students could not think of a topic on their own and the brighter students during the anti-war movement had "written terrific papers--but they were self-indoctrinated." In other words, topics which invited student participation in writing or discussion also invited multiple interpretations, perhaps challenging the teachers' version.

All teaching involves selection, inclusion and omission because of time constraints, available materials, or the understanding levels of the students. What is interesting in the four schools is that omission of certain kinds of information, the controversial, the recent and the complex, was systematically a means of reducing student involvement.

Defensive Simplification

The fourth strategy of knowledge control as classroom control is important because it cuts across ideological lines and institutional contexts more than do the others. That is the tactic by which teachers get around what they perceive to be a lack of strong student interest or the weakness of student abilities. They elicit the students' compliance on a lesson by promising that it will not be difficult and will not go into any depth, that it will not demand much student effort. While fragmentation, mystification, and omission strategies may all be seen as efforts to simplify content, this last is distinguished by the term defensive. Unlike the old wielder of the hickory stick, the teacher announces a topic of study, which may sound very complicated, then apologizes for it and promises it will not demand much work. Examples might be supply and demand or the industrialization-urbanization syndrome. Any real treatment would require time, comparison of varied interpretations, investigations of varied information sources and the effort of making several attempts at explanation. The teacher gets the students to cooperate without resisting by promising that the study of this topic will require no commitment of effort, and little time, on their part. This strategy of making knowledge inaccessible makes twenty-plus years of research on "effectiveness" look incredibly naive. Equally naive was the research hypothesis which guided the classroom observations in search of the kinds of economics information made available in these classrooms. The specific topics became almost irrelevant when they were subject to a defensive presentation.

Topics introduced "defensively" were less likely to be politically sensitive or controversial than those which were mystified. Rather, they tended to be topics which needed a great deal of unpackaging to be grasped, which were not amenable to reduction to items in a list. When a complicated topic became unavoidable, the teacher would often quickly follow the announcement of the topic with the caveat that "it won't be as bad as it sounds." The abbreviated presentation may take the form of a brief handout to read, a short film strip or lecture or a worksheet; most important is the ritual of seeming to deal with the topic. The teacher announces the topic, the students groan (as observed by the Maizeville assistant principal in discussing the reduction of math problems assigned), the brief activity proceeds, the teacher asks if there are any questions; there are none.

Administrative Contexts

It is important to situate these defensive teaching strategies in the varied institutional arrangements we have described. In those schools where the educative purposes of teachers were undermined, in their estimation, defensive teaching characterized most class lessons. In the more supportive administrative environments, the strong-chair relationship at Maizeville and the unified curriculum supported by the administration at Nelson High, the simplification was more varied by individual personality. In general, at these schools, teachers demanded much more of themselves and each other and built many fewer barriers between classroom knowledge and their personal stores of information. They were less inclined to omit

controversy, to avoid issues and complicated explanations. Certainly, the science and economics of energy course at Nelson or Mr. Carrico's history and economics lectures at Maizeville were filled with extended descriptions and explanations, complicated topics and technical concepts, and the acknowledgement of disagreement among citizens and among experts on certain topics. All of these treatments of information demand a great deal of the teacher. But even these teachers did not always demand as much of their students as of themselves. They did require student reading and listening to speakers or to lectures; they did require some writing. But there was little discussion in which students participated in bringing information to the exchange, and there were seldom written assignments which required students to synthesize information rather than repeat it. For these teachers, defensive teaching was, when it occurred, more a response to anticipated student inertia or resistance, rather than a de-skilling response to administrative priorities for social control.

Other Variations

Educators are accustomed to think in terms of student differences. Curriculum analysts speak of ideological differences among teachers. The examples of defensive teaching witnesses in these schools cut across differences in teachers' personal political and pedagogical philosophies and across formal definitions of student ability variations. If we understand the pervasiveness in spite of expected variations and exceptions, we may better grasp what is at work when schools mediate social knowledge.

As has been mentioned, most of these teachers taught to the large group, not to individuals or groups of individuals. They rarely spoke about their students as individuals; they spoke of the range of ability differences but often taught as though there were none. None taught only to the brightest students or those of higher social or economic standing. The way these teachers dealt with student differences is much more complex and demonstrates the potential for rationalizing contradictory goals inherent in their institutional roles. Most tried to teach as though ability or developmental differences did not exist.

The simplification strategies enabled them to do this while still being fairly conscientious about "covering material." Fragmentation reduced content to pieces manageable to students of lower abilities. One of the purposes of systematically omitting current or complex topics was to prevent the intrusion of verbal students' ideas into the pace of the lecture. One of the purposes of mystification was to avoid having to go into a whole series of presentations of complex topics until every student understood.

As striking as the approach to student differences was the prevalence of these teaching strategies across differences in teacher ideology. The selection of teaching strategies which maximize efficiencies and control of student behavior is observed in teachers who otherwise appear to have very different political values. Miss Langer taught American history as a chronology of presidents and congresses and tended to reify the view that citizens must support whoever is in power. Mr. Schmidt said frequently that "We are all

Progressives . . . " and claims ideological links to Jefferson, while making lists of Hamilton-like policies. Mr. Seager was a labor organizer and teller of stories; he was clearly to the left of most of the other teachers observed, and assigned public issues pamphlets designed to raise issues out of the normal confines of consensus information. But he frequently turned them into seatwork by making students answer the questions at the end of the chapter rather than discuss the issues, as intended by the pamphlets. One could not deduce his love for political debate and citizen involvement from his course's similarity to Miss Langer's lack of student discussion or Mr. Schmidt's passive students copying from transparencies.

The most politically radical teacher had no patience with a consensus view of history or a glossing over of social problems for students. Mr. Lennon's motivations for being a teacher, as discussed in the Freeburg High chapter, were to raise student consciousness of their political situation, their role in the power relations of society, their potential for efficacy as a citizen. Yet he required little of students, half-apologized for assignments, and lectured erratically. His asides were an enriching political education, but once the lecture started, his ideas became "social studies" and were taken less seriously, little different from the defensive strategies of far more conservative teachers.

Classroom Control and Knowledge Control

Teaching defensively is easily understood: gain students' cooperation by making school work easy. The conclusion that must not be drawn from these examples is that all teachers deny students

access to information critical to their functioning in society, or that all teachers use the techniques outlined here under the guise of teaching just to limit student access to information. What we have seen is that when teachers do control knowledge access, they often do so consciously. Their chief criteria, as expressed in interview after interview, for selecting strategies of knowledge control seemed to be based on maintaining their own authority and efficiencies. Knowledge control as a goals is as much a desire for classroom control as for selective distribution of information. This finding is crucial for our understanding of the ways school legitimate certain kinds of information and de-legitimate others. The processes and rationale of legitimation, and the legitimation of processes, or ways of knowing are central to any understanding of the role of the school in transmitting fairly narrow selections from the infinite range of human knowledge.

Although cultural reproduction is generally discussed on a societal level, as the product of a nexus of systematic forces, the mediation of cultural forms in these schools is highly conditioned by the individual's attempt to deal with institutional constraints. The constraints are not the same in each school. The philosophical values the individual brings to the classroom are not in all cases the same. Yet the strategies for instruction are quite similar: control students by making schoolwork undemanding.

These teaching strategies have several crucial consequences for teachers and students. For teachers they involve de-skilling. When teachers choose these methods of teaching, they are splitting

the learning process into means and ends and reinforcing a concern for extrinsic rewards. Having resisted reductivist packaging of information common to elementary schools (Apple, 1982), they have participated in their own de-skilling by oversimplifying content at the expense of their own expertise and their potentially beneficial interaction with students.

The impact on students is no less critical. Students are treated as clients in this process; they are rewarded for splitting their own roles as students into false ends and means, with short-term goals in course credits and long-term losses in how to learn and how to participate in the creation of knowledge.

Their client status, as will be further elaborated in the conclusion, causes further withdrawal and disengagement from the learning process. In these middle-class schools, resistance to school knowledge takes private, individualized form, as silent suspicion of course content, as miminal effort. This form of resistance only exacerbates the cycle of minimal efforts on the part of teachers, who perceive the resistance but do not understand its causes except in their tentative conclusions about teenagers' not being what they used to, or "the times."

One further implication of these defensive teaching strategies is that they help engender student resistance and disengagement from school practices outside the classroom as well as within, unless within the school are teachers less prone to these strategies. When administrators see apathetic, resisting, uninvolved students with "nothing to do," they immediately turn to more measures of student

control, yet setting off another cycle of pressures on teachers and resistance from students.

Because they interpret their own roles as educative rather than aimed at social control, teachers are largely unaware of the irony of their own role in perpetuating social control goals at the expense of educational ones, and of feeding the cycle of social control methods which undermine the educational practices of the school.

The gap between what teachers are doing and what they could be doing in the observed schools are not gaps imposed by the researcher's values, but by the teachers' own comments in interviews as they discuss what students ought to learn and what the subject is really all about. Yet even the teachers most resistant to the technological culture of administrative forms resort to instructional strategies aimed at the kind of minimal standards and desire for order they reject at the administrative level.

From the example of Louis Braille, we must conclude that defensive teaching is not new nor unique to bureaucratic schools, nor to American schools. The institute adopted the Braille method of transcribing print into raised dots when the old faculty began to be replaced and when the students had spread the method informally by teaching each other. The cycle of lowered expectations, defensive teaching and minimal participation in schooling may also need to be broken by the emergence among teachers, students or administrators of new rationale, new justifications for the processes they choose for schools.

CHAPTER 10

THE SHAPE OF ECONOMICS INFORMATION

A detailed analysis of the economics content resulting from these patterns of defensive teaching or avoidance of those patterns lies outside the scope of this technical report on the administrative context of classroom curriculum decisions. It will be published separately and is not a part of this report.

Because economics information was the focal point of comparison among the four schools, however, a summary of the nature of economics content resulting from the teachers' responses to their economics content is in order. Two important findings shine through the multitude of teacher lecture notes, handouts, student manuals, textbooks, films, student interviews and discussions analyzed for this project. The first relates to the preceding discussion of defensive teaching. Not all teachers taught defensively, and among those who did, not all did so every day. However, the pattern of defensive teaching reduced all historical and economics content to "social studies," to the ritual of gaining a social studies credit. The teachers discussed a wide range of economics topics, and gave them a central place in American history and current problems courses. They further approached these topics from a variety of philosophical and political positions. However, the specific topics became almost irrelevant when they were subjected to a defensive presentation.

When presented as items in a list or as mystified abstractions, radical theories of labor-management relations seem little different

from more conservative lists of laws, institutions and presented in a way that prohibited question or implied uninformed public trust. Those topics not presented defensively, but dealt with in depth and in regard to student differences and to historians' or citizens' varying interpretations took on far more meaning. Also, those topics presented as incorporating teachers' and students' personal stores of information, without "walls" between personal knowledge and the official knowledge of the classroom rose above the trivialization mechanisms and engendered student response. Here, the treatment, rather than the specific topic again became the catalyst for investigation or participation rather than disengagement or suspicion. The correlation between the complexity of the information presented, its basis in authoritative resources, and its assumptions of student involvement greatly outweighed differences in topics per se or in their representations of particular interests or points of view. The paper discussing this phenomenon includes examples from in-use curricula which demonstrate the power of the knowledge form to dominate the content and the expected differences among teacher perspectives.

The second major finding relates to the role for the student in the economy, during student years and after high school, assumed or presented through the economics curriculum. When we discuss knowledge content it must be with the caveat that the knowledge is not to be "out there," apart from the minds of the participants, but the result of the interaction among participants' thoughts and evaluations, and the "presented" material. With this in mind, one

may look at the presented economics to discern what role for the hearer is presumed or advocated. Although most cultural reproduction literature which examines the role of the school in the economic structures of society uses labor metaphors for students, partly because of their processing for the labor force by the differential treatments of schools, it has been advocated in this report that a client model might better explain the nature of the students' role in schools. This is underscored by the treatment of the student in the selection and forms of economics topics.

The dominant themes of economics topics are two: the "economy" as what happens in Washington or in the analysis of economists, in broad policies (the establishment of the Federal Reserve, the monthly unemployment figures and cost of living indexes); one's central role in the economy is as consumer, not producer. The economy as the lived exchange of goods and services, as people's jobs and lives, is present on in rare and brief units on social history. Otherwise, the study of the "economy" is a history of boom and bust cycles, such theory as supply and demand, elasticity, productivity or marginal utility. It is the study of professional economists' jargon and governmental regulations, tariffs, taxes, or fiscal and monetary interventions. Rarely is the economy discussed as the lived economy culture, as having a basis in the public.

The second theme is related to this model. That is, where personal economics are discussed, as consumer economics units in larger courses, or a personal economics courses in themselves, the emphasis is on consumer rather than producer economics. Mr. Lennon,

with his labor background and sensitivities broke out of this model when explaining some current events; and Mr. Seager diverged from the model in discussing such labor history as the Triangle fire and organizing of garment workers. Apart from exceptions in economic history, economics at a personal level was geared more to the consuming role within a given market, rather than from the perspective of entrepreneur, laborer, capitalist or other shaper of markets. This was true even when teachers knew that students' jobs related to micro-economics topics such as retail installment contracts or warranties. The teachers conscientiously tried at Nelson, Forest Hills (in a course not observed for this study), and at Freeburg to teach students their rights, their protections by government and private regulatory bodies, and their grievance procedures needed to be good consumers. The presentation at Maizeville was more theoretical but still aimed directly at increasing students' knowledge in order to increase their efficacy. Personal economics was an area rarely characterized by boundaries between the teacher's public and private information despite those same boundaries in other topics treated by the same teacher. This goal of increasing students' knowledge and therefore power in the market economy was predicated on certain middle-class lifestyles, information to be needed when they soon began renting apartments, buying cars, making installment purchases, inspecting contracts and warranties. The limitations were on the kinds of economic concerns rather than on the spirit of knowledge access. This economic information model of consuming reinforced to some degree the pedagogical models of student passivity in their

implications for a client rather than a role as producer. Further presentation of examples from these data will illustrate these inter-relationships and demonstrate the need for conceptualizing students' roles, in the classroom and in the presumptions of school knowledge by characterizations arising from the situation rather than from the assumed appropriateness of labor force deductions.

In summary, the analysis of the economics content will elaborate the power of the models of presentation to wash across persona, political, pedagogical and theoretical differences in reducing the content to ritual information when defensive teaching strategies are used. This jeopardized the credibility of the content and reduced the effects of expected teacher variations.

Where defensive teaching strategies do not proscribe economics content, the dominant economic model is one of consumption rather than production, calling into question labor metaphors for understanding all that is at work in schools, especially in courses where students are learning about their future roles in society. The client status engendered by the above defensive teaching strategies is to some extent reified by the consumption model of economics content.

For those topics not subjected to defensive teaching strategies and not related to personal economics, the finding is that the complexity, the openness of access to resources, the treatment of issues as well as facts, the consideration of on-going conflict as well as past policies are all heavily shaped by the administrative context. Examples will be presented which demonstrate the direct relationship

between administrative support for adequate resources and for teacher judgment and the students' access to the range of economics topics and the treatment of them in the classroom.

CONCLUSION: THE CONTRADICTIONS OF CONTROL

Even though the training of school personnel, and their separate meetings and journals, belies an administrative effect on curriculum, the administrative context greatly affects the level of participation of teachers and students. Even where principals appear to be most removed from the autonomy of classrooms, their policies of deferring all curriculum to teachers or of emphasizing order and control rather than teaching and learning may have greater effect on students' access to knowledge than their formal curriculum directives and powers of oversight.

Within these schools exist definite tensions between the control functions and the educative purposes. Most frequently, these are embodied in the distinct categories of personnel, in administrative personnel interested in the smooth-functioning of the system of externally marketable credits and credentials, and in order in the corridors; and in teachers who think of themselves as educators and not keepers of order.

We have seen that where the administration supports curriculum directly with resources, shared free time for teachers, aides, thoughtfully arranged buildings and professional trust, as at Nelson High, teachers expend effort far beyond the minimum to open up vast varieties of information to their students, including their own personal information. Where resources, moral support, supplies and working conditions are absent or grudging, as at Freeburg, only the risks assumed by individual teachers, alone or in small groups, can

overcome the institutional inertia which engender minimum standards and resistance at all levels. This means that openness of information and resources to students is not strictly determined by the administrative context, but that the overemphasis of order in the administrative context shifts the burden of knowledge access to the individual teacher or student. Where this is true, the students' access to information is likely to be less consistent, to be more dependent on teacher personality or energy levels or feelings of enthusiasm for the subject.

For policy, the study would indicate the need for administrators to evaluate their schools programs in conjunction with teachers not in terms of student achievements, or of numbers graduating or going on to college, or of discipline referrals, but in terms of the kinds of knowledge to which students have access and the kinds of participation in learning offered to students.

In developing curriculum theory, the empirical data show the need to avoid mechanistic, deterministic generalizations about what is possible or prevalent in schools in technological societies. Instead, we must ask where policies embody active interests and where they are the relics of past borrowings that now may be serving no one's interests. The links between the administrative practice and the larger economy seem to be the language of technological rationalities and the language of order. The mentality of short-term accounting, typical of American business, sacrifices long-term personal interests to institutional efficiencies. If anyone's interests are being served by this pattern in schools, it is not

administrators, who inadvertently create staff problems by undermining the teaching-learning process when they devote inordinate staff and resources of the school to order-keeping functions. Rather than create or sustain order by this emphasis, they perhaps unknowingly create staff problems by feeding teachers' lowered expectations and therefore, efforts. And they contribute to students' resistance to institutional procedures of questionable benefit to them. The contradiction of the control pattern, they are in increasing the resistance the control patterns were meant to reduce, and in preventing universal socialization of students into "appropriate" behaviors. Students are not by this process being socialized into consensus information or into officially prescribed patterns of conformist behavior appropriate for the labor force.

If anyone's interests are served by these school practices, it would seem to be those who would reduce citizens to clients, to passive recipients of institutional procedures and criteria. A client is one who receives a service in exchange for some category of eligibility, whether it is proof of poverty for welfare assistance or demonstration of behind-the-wheel skills for a driver's license. Although much recent writing on the subject of cultural reproduction and the social role of schools discusses students as workers and as pre-workers, that is as young people being socialized into labor force categories of skill, economic destination, and appropriate attitudes, that metaphor has some limitations. It presumes a role for students that is contributory, interactive, and productive, even

if de-skilled and manipulated. This is rarely their role in social studies classes.

As demonstrated in the economics content, school teachers may be ahead of critical theorists in understanding students' future economic roles, even though they may not fully appreciate students' present work habits. Economics content was geared to consumption rather than to production. Most of these students were presently working in order to consume; they felt more power in the market place, and in displaying their purchases, than they felt in school. They often felt more power, more choice, more personal responsibility in consuming than they did in producing. Very few related their present jobs to saving for training or education for a future career; very few chose part-time jobs to experiment with kinds of work they might want to pursue later. They worked in order to spend.

A client to a large-scale institution is little different from a consumer of a product: neither has influence into the processes of production of the good or service; neither can set the price of the exchange in a complex market. While the worker does not own the means of production, or control it, he or she may through resistance or participation affect its processes and outcomes. A client can only withdraw his or her desire for the service. This is closer to what happens when students resist the social control functions in their halls and classrooms. The role for participatory learning is rare at these schools; so asking questions or adding information illustrative of or counter to the provided lectures and texts is unlikely as a strategy for asserting personal values. What is left

is to silently lower the degree of involvement in the teaching-learning process.

From extensive student interviews, we see that this acceptance of a client role is not the same as socialization into the substantive values of the institution: it is an impersonal relationship of limited effort and commitment, which denies not only some of the legitimacy of the institution, but for students the confidence in their own ability to produce, in this case to produce, discover or evaluate information.

By underemphasizing the educative aspects of schooling, secondary administrators contribute to the de-skilling of teachers, further alienating teachers from their professional competence. This cycle of teacher-student cynicism and delegitimating of the educative function of schools is <u>not</u> evidence that the credentialing or social control functions of public schools are all that remain. Instead, the cynicism and the tension it engenders are evidence that expectations for the educative legacy persist. They not only persist but find creative form in the institutional arrangements of schools like Maizeville and Nelson, and in the personal efforts of those like Mr. Reznick at Freeburg, who personally assumed the responsibility of opening information to students though the school climate was inhibiting and the resources scarce.

To raise expectations for the educative function to a level that engages teachers and students actively in the teaching-learning process requires either collegial leverage of teachers, or the assumption of risks of time, energy and occasional conflict by

individual teachers who try to assert educational goals in the face of pervasive social control rationale in their schools. It could also require the assertion of student goals for learning. What these schools show is that by subordinating the educative goals, school administrators increase the resistance of teachers and students. The resistance calls for more controls. By supporting rather than constraining the educational efforts of teachers, administrators could avoid the inherent contradiction of control goals. It is interesting that the administrative ties to technical modes and to social control are so strong, that virtually no literature on the transformation of schooling in a technological society has predicated the reforms on administrative policies. Teacher or student bases for counter models are discussed; or reforms are seen as emerging in transformation of the economic-political structure of which schools are a part.

The contradiction of controls in schools is magnified in the larger crisis of institutional legitimacy in the broader society. As economic crises mount, the pervasiveness of technological language should no longer be sufficient to hide its long-term inadequacy as a model of human institutions. Although more hidden and less dramatic than worker resistance or political struggles, the resistance to control forms in schools is present, is potentially emancipatory, is presently too individualized to do more than trigger more controls, but is a conflict with staying power. Its ability to transform schools and open students' access to information will depend greatly on tracing the internal controls of schools to their

historical roots and to their embodiment of current interests rather than deducing those linkages from the social effects of school practices. And it will depend on the linking of the educative purposes of schools to their heritage and embodiment of interests as well.

In his correspondence with John Adams on the role of citizens, Thomas Jefferson[1] declared that voting was not enough to protect citizens from government; neither is law. He asserted that education is important to teach a healthy distrust of government; education should teach morality. By this he meant that it should actively teach pessimism of government in order that citizens would seek to control government rather than be controlled by it. He saw a movement toward public education as essential for fostering a distrust of government, as basic to educating citizens about issues so they could act on them.

The heritage of knowledge access is at least as rooted in our culture as the legacy of social control. The reclaiming of that heritage goes against the logic of many of the practices of American high schools. But it resonates with those efforts by individual and collective teachers who take risks in their institution to involve students in learning and by administrators who structure the school in a way that supports and creates opportunity for knowledge access.

NOTES ON PART III

Chapter 8

[1]Lecture on American legal history, J. Millard Hurst, University of Wisconsin Law School, Madison, 1979.

Chapter 9

[1]L. McNeil, "Defensive Teaching and Classroom Control," in Michael W. Apple and Lois Weis, editors, Ideology and Practice in Schooling (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982).

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